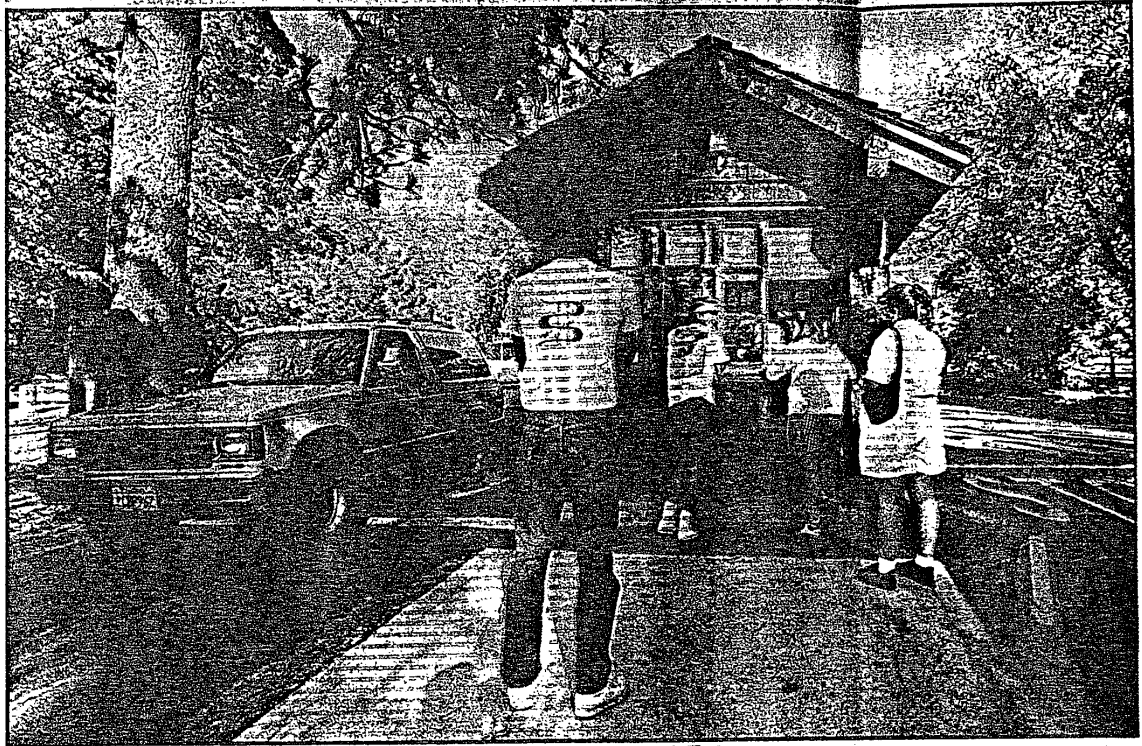


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Tribune photo by Cindy Lubke Romero

Visitors entering the Green Valley campground in Cuyamaca State Park are feeling the bite of higher fees charged for state services

Mounting fees a fact of life in California

By Ron Roach
Tribune Sacramento Bureau Chief

SACRAMENTO — FROM CRADLE TO grave, Californians are paying more to state government.

It costs more to pitch a tent in a state park, attend a state university or become a state-sanctioned lawyer or barber.

New and higher fees are attached to just about every government-related service or activity under the California sun.

Even lobbyists will pay to cover costs of newly required seminars on ethical behavior for lobbyists, legislators and legislative staff.

To keep pace with inflation and a growing population's demand for services, the Legislature and governor have created new fees and increased others. Some fees help provide services that no longer can be funded from the state's beleaguered,

tax-supported general fund.

Taxes are relatively hard to increase — two-thirds majorities of the Senate and Assembly are required. But a fee can be imposed or raised by simple majority votes.

As a result, for example, a \$2 surcharge is being continued for another year for copies of birth and death certificates. The Legislature decided more money was needed for a program to improve record-keeping, so the surcharge — originally scheduled to expire on Dec. 31 — was extended.

The state burial fee goes up 100 percent on Jan. 1.

It is much more expensive — twice as costly as a decade ago — to participate in sport fishing or hunting, and spiraling license fees are still not enough to finance the Department of Fish and Game.

Fees to attend the University of California and

the California State Universities went up 10 percent this year for California residents. They've soared more than 100 percent in the last decade.

In its most recent session, the Legislature passed bills to make it more costly for law school graduates to belong to the State Bar, and for a person to become a cosmetologist, a barber or a dispenser of hearing aids. All were signed into law by Gov. Deukmejian.

It was also decided this year that local governments, if they want to raise money for programs to link disabled persons with services, can vote to add \$20 to the \$10 fine for parking illegally in handicapped spaces.

Spray-paint cans and certain felt-tip marking pens are going to cost more because the state is adding a dime for a can and a nickel for a pen to help fund anti-graffiti programs.

Please see FEES: A-4, Col. 5

FEES: Hiked by state

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For those who bring cars from other states and do not meet California's stringent anti-smog standards, there is a new \$300 smog impact fee, which took effect Oct. 15.

Not all fees are going up, but each year scores of bills are introduced in the Legislature to do just that. Some fail, some pass. An occasional veto heads off an increase approved by legislators.

Deukmejian in September vetoed a bill to increase the marriage license surcharge, from \$19 to \$24, that is allocated for programs to combat domestic violence. That would have boosted to \$49 the total cost for getting a wedding license; the governor said he didn't want to price marriage out of the market for poor people.

It was the third time Deukmejian has vetoed a bill to boost marriage-license fees. Sen. Robert Presley, D-Riverside, whose bill established the program for battered spouses in 1977, succeeded in gaining several increases before Deukmejian drew the line.

State government, which was faced with a \$2 billion or more budget shortfall this year, has reached into citizens' pockets to help pay for services without raising income taxes. Here are some of the fees cre-

of enforcement, suggesting, for example, that half the people who fish are doing so illegally.

● Another new law requires lobbyists, legislators and legislative staff to take a course in ethics every two years. The course, scheduled to begin in December for lobbyists and in January for legislators and staff, will require fees not yet determined but expected to be at least \$25 per lobbyist. Legislator and staff seminar expenses will come out of the Legislature's budget.

● The Board of Cosmetology, which raised two-year license renewal fees to \$20 in 1989, received legislative authorization to increase renewals to a maximum of \$40, and to increase application fees by 25 percent. The board is not expected to set the renewal fee at the maximum allowable rate.

● Barbers now pay \$42 to renew two-year licenses, but the Legislature authorized increases in fees set by the Board of Barber Examiners. The board has yet to set the new fee, but it cannot exceed \$60 in 1991 and \$75 in 1992.

● The maximum fee for renewal of permanent licenses to dispense hearing aids was increased from \$75 to \$200.

● For those old clunkers that are not being driven and are not registered, the Department of Motor Vehicles has begun asking owners to pay a \$5 fee in lieu of registration to confirm ownership. An owner must certify that the vehicle will not be operated during the subsequent one-year registration period. There will be stiffer penalties for failing to register cars or failing to file for non-operational status.

The department is carrying about 8 million old or unwanted vehicles on its records and wants to know where they are.

● A 10-percent increase in resident student fees at the University of California took effect this fall, bringing the total annual fee to \$1,624. The UC Board of Regents recently recommended a 3 percent increase for 1991-92.

"We usually do increase fees moderately each year to keep pace with the increasing costs of doing business caused by increased enrollment," said UC spokesman Rick Malastina. The most recent increase, which was abnormally high, was required by the governor and Legislature to help balance the state budget. The regents had called for a 4.5 percent hike.

In 1980-81, UC resident undergraduate fees were \$776 a year. For the first time, additional fees of about \$400 are required this year to enroll in UC law and medical schools.

State government, which was faced with a \$2 billion or more budget shortfall this year, has reached into citizens' pockets to help pay for services without raising income taxes

ated, extended or increased as a result of legislative action and the governor's approval in 1990, most of them taking effect Jan. 1:

● The \$2 surcharge on certified copies of birth, death, marriage or divorce records remains in effect for another year, until Jan. 1, 1992. The surcharge was to expire at the end of this year.

● Another new law doubles the state's burial fee, from \$4 to \$8, and the permit fee for distributing remains, from \$8 to \$16. The extra income will pay for indigent burials and training courses for coroners.

● It will cost more to commune with nature in a state park. The Deukmejian administration, trying to balance the state budget, moved swiftly to impose higher fees — an average increase of 34 percent — at

with nature in a state park. The Deukmejian administration, trying to balance the state budget, moved swiftly to impose higher fees — an average increase of 34 percent — at state parks in time for the Labor Day holiday crush.

In the first major increase since 1987, the state boosted park day-use fees to \$5. They were \$1.50 in 1977, and increased to \$2 three years ago. Regular campsite fees, \$5 in 1983, went to \$10 in 1987 and are now \$12. Premium coastal parks remain \$2 more.

Larry Paynter, spokesman for the Department of Parks and Recreation, said fee increases "have been pretty much keeping pace with inflation."

Had the department waited to make the fee increases effective after the first of the year, it would have required a 140 percent increase to make up for a projected \$16 million budget shortfall, Paynter said. That would mean charging \$24 for a family campsite.

"I couldn't imagine people paying that much," Paynter said. "A Motel 6 would be cheaper."

● Hunting and fishing license fees have more than doubled in 10 years, while the number of licenses sold has declined. Poaching has become a bigger problem for game wardens. The Department of Fish and Game's primary source of revenue is license sales.

In 1980, a typical resident angler spent \$10 for an annual license, including \$5 for the basic license and another \$5 for inland water, trout and salmon stamps. The fishing license fee for Jan. 1, 1991, is \$21.50, which includes inland water, trout and salmon fishing, plus a 5 percent handling fee. In all, the cost to go fishing will be \$1.60 more than this year.

The 1991-92 hunting license fee, which takes effect next July, will be \$22, with a deer tag costing \$12.75, plus 5 percent handling fees, taking the basic license to \$23.10 and the deer tag to \$13.40. A license this year was \$21, plus a 50-cent handling fee, and the deer tag, was \$12.75, including a 50-cent handling fee.

Duck stamps remain \$7.50. A safety stamp for first-time hunters, \$2.50 this year, will cost 75 cents more in 1991.

In 1980, a hunting license was \$10.25, a duck stamp cost \$5, and a deer tag, \$3.

Although California's population is growing rapidly (totaling 30 million by recent estimates), the number of hunting licenses sold has decreased in the last decade, from 554,000 in 1980 to 415,000 in 1988. There were 2.46 million fishing licenses sold in 1980, compared with 2.39 million eight years later.

Some blame the declines on a lack

In 1980-81, UC resident undergraduate fees were \$776 a year. For the first time, additional fees of about \$400 are required this year to enroll in UC law and medical schools.

● At the California State Universities, the annual service fee 10 years

Another new law requires lobbyists, legislators and legislative staff to take a course in ethics every two years

ago for full-time students was \$160. With a 10 percent hike this year, student fees at CSU schools are now \$780 a year.

● Lawyers in general will pay \$23 more a year for membership in the California State Bar, plus an additional \$15 for the State Bar's client security fund. The Legislature sets the level of State Bar dues every two years.

● Leopard, lion and tiger owners should be prepared to pay something extra. A new law requires the Department of Fish and Game, by next May, to come up with procedures and fees to cover permit and inspection costs. With some exemptions, particularly for zoos and circuses, the new law applies to the sale or keeping of exotic animals that pose a threat to the public, other wildlife or agriculture. Cats, except for house cats, are specifically covered in the legislation.

One fee that was not a candidate for an increase in 1990 is for the driver's license, which has been \$10 since 1981, when it jumped from \$3.25. Motor vehicle registration, \$11 until increased to \$23 in 1981, also has a \$1 surcharge to cover costs of additional Highway Patrol officers. This surcharge, imposed in 1981, was due to expire at the end of this year, but the Legislature extended it for two years, until Jan. 1, 1993.

Bill Gengler, Department of Motor Vehicles spokesman, said there are no current plans to increase DMV fees.

Retiree loses bid to keep seeing-eye steeds in yard

ARTESIA, N.M. (AP) — A nearly blind retiree has lost his bid to keep two "seeing-eye horses" in his yard.

The City Council voted 6-1 to deny George Bradford a zoning variance opposed by neighbors who complained of the smell from his corral.

Bradford, 71, who had been a construction worker and a truck driver, retired in 1963 because of his eyesight.