

Calif. homeless crisis expands to rural areas

By Kevin Fagan and Alison Graham, San Francisco Chronicle

California housing costs are spiraling so high that they are pushing the state's homelessness crisis into places it's never been before – sparsely populated rural counties.

A *Chronicle* analysis of biennial homeless counts taken early this year across California shows the sharpest increases occurred not in San Francisco and other urban centers but in out-of-the-way places such as the thickly forested Sierra Nevada and the dusty flatlands and low hills of the northern Sacramento Valley.

Statewide, the *Chronicle's* examination shows, homelessness rose by 15 percent from 2015 to this year. In heavily populated centers such as Los Angeles and the Bay Area, where tent cities have long been part of the landscape, even double-digit increases like that might not suggest that something has fundamentally changed. But in rural areas, the increases have come as a shock.

There is no year-round shelter in El Dorado County , and camps are multiplying on the edges of the county seat of Placerville.

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