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# Opinion

Soquel Editorial

2/17/82

## And It Rained...

After suffering through the major disaster in January, there are times when it appeared we might be in for an instant replay during the President's Day holidays.

It rained and it rained.

For those who live in the flood-prone areas in the troubled spots of the Santa Cruz Mountains, it was a long night Monday.

Fortunately, there were respites from the rain during the afternoon but it came down in sheets as darkness fell and then again before midnight, stretching into the early hours of Tuesday.

It seemed as though the rains would never stop.

But they did and the sun came out Tuesday to the relief of the community and its fearful citizens. We didn't need another flood.

It didn't take long for the creeks to seep back within their banks and the San Lorenzo resumed its normally tranquil, if muddy, path through the city's flood control channel.

It was a near thing.

The creeks went up in a hurry Monday night. The Soquel, Aptos, Carbonera and Branciforte tripled in size and fury for a few apprehensive hours.

This time the debris was rare for the streams had been cleared by the ferocity of the January floods.

It isn't often you get so much rainfall so quickly in the Santa Cruz area. It wasn't like the downpour of Jan. 4, but it was enough to make folks think back.

Four inches of rain is a lot for Santa Cruz and when it comes after a major disaster, you can't help but wonder about the accuracy of the law of averages.

With the weekend rains, the total rainfall in the city of Santa Cruz reached 32.78 inches, more than an inch above our seasonal average.

In the first six months of the rain year, from July to January, we had 13.06 inches. It rained that much in January and so far this month we have received slightly more than 6.5 inches, more than an inch above the average for the entire month of February.

It isn't likely we will set a rain record for this month. If we do, we could be in far more serious woes as it rained 14.74 inches in February 1902.

It rained more than 14 inches in February 1941 when the city of Santa Cruz suffered severe enough damage to organize the drive for the flood control projects.

This appears to be a year when the total rainfall will exceed the 40-inch mark, something which happens about once every 10 years.

In the past 50 years, the rainfall has exceeded 40 inches nine times, the last being in 1972-73. However, we had successive years of 44 inches of rain in 1968-69 and in 1969-70.

The record rainfall occurred in the 1940-41 year when 61.62 inches of rain fell in the city and twice that much occurred in the Boulder Creek-Empire Grade area.

Under normal conditions we should get another 9.6 inches of rain before the end of June with most of it taking place the rest of this month and in March.

This has not been an average year, so what takes place in the weeks and months ahead remains to be determined. We would prefer no more nights of apprehension.

It is all too evident that the ground is saturated with moisture and that any serious rain could, indeed, wreak more damage.

Most of all we could use some dry weather with mild winds, not enough to knock over anymore trees, but enough to restore more normal conditions.