

LIBRARY - BUDGET  
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**Nine libraries at risk**

■ **Santa Cruz system chief says tax shift threatens all branches but one.**

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Nine of the 10 branches of the Santa Cruz city and county library system — all but the main library downtown — will be shut down unless money is found to replace funds lost in the state's property-tax shift, according to Anne Turner, chief of the library system.

"It's crazy. It makes no sense whatsoever. I cannot believe the governor and the Legislature knew what they were doing," Turner said Thursday. "They said they were taking the money to support education, and you cannot have education without public libraries."

**\$1.8 million cut**

Turner said the shift of property-tax revenues from the counties to the state means the proposed \$4.3 million budget for the Santa Cruz city-county system will be cut by 42 percent. She said the \$1.8 million reduction will create "a disaster."

Turner noted that under the agreement between the county and the city of Santa Cruz, the city matches a portion of the funds earmarked for libraries by the county board of supervisors. Because of the state budget passed earlier this summer, \$1.2 million in county property taxes allocated to the library system will be sent to the state capital instead. That, Turner explained, will mean a loss of an additional \$600,000 that would have been the city's matching portion of the county's \$1.2 million.

**A bleak outlook**

"It is very, very, very, very bleak," Turner complained. "Unless the county finds a source of revenue somewhere, there'll be nothing else to do but to close all the branches and just provide library services here" at the main library in downtown Santa Cruz.

There are nine branches in the county in addition to main library.

Supervisors cannot consider redistributing the county fiscal pie until they return from their July recess. But at this point, said a spokeswoman for the county administrative office, there is no money available for libraries.

See **LIBRARIES**, Page 4B

**Nine Santa Cruz library branches may be closed**

■ **LIBRARIES**

from Page 1B

"This office is very supportive of libraries, and the county is very supportive of libraries," said Dinah Phillips. "But there's nothing scheduled for the board of supervisors to consider the library situation at this point. What we'll probably try to do first is to see if any legislative remedies, any relief, might be coming from Sacramento."

"We'll try to see if they (the governor and legislators) knew what they were doing to libraries."

Already strapped for cash, the city-county library system has cut back on services across the board. All but one of the branches are closed now on Mondays, and hours at each branch have been cut back.

Turner said she had not given up hope.

"There are a lot of people in this county who support library services," she said. "They're going to have to raise their voices and make themselves heard. The supervisors support libraries, too."