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Scientists weren't surprised

Earthquake 1989 - Geology

Aftershocks set nerves on edge

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SANTA CRUZ — A series of sharp earthquakes that jolted the county awake Wednesday morning may not have surprised scientists, but they scared the heck out of people who couldn't forget the terror of Oct. 17.

The temblors were aftershocks of the October quake, said Professor Thorne Lay, new director of the Richter Laboratory at UC Santa Cruz.

"Indications are that this is fairly typical aftershock behavior," he said.

The largest of 13 aftershocks which struck before 9:30 a.m. registered 5.4 and was the biggest since Oct. 17, Lay said.

No injuries were reported. A quake of magnitude 5 is considered capable of causing considerable damage. PG&E reported that power was temporarily knocked out for some 11,000 customers, mostly in the Pajaro Valley area.

Five dwellings in Aromas suffered considerable damage, and others homes had minor damage, according to Aromas Fire District Battalion Chief Wilbur Parker.

A home and a double wide mobile home at 235 Payne Road were knocked off their foundations, Parker said. Two other homes on the same street had chimneys which collapsed into the living rooms, he said.

And Parker said he ordered an "older stucco structure" evacuated because its "mud sill" foundation had collapsed, interior walls were bowed, two windows



Landslide triggered by 5.0 quake at 8:46 a.m. Wednesday rushes down a mountainside near the epicenter, toward Highway 129 east of Watsonville.

Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

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