

A home away from their home away from home

New temporary quarters for Santa Cruz firefighters

Sentinel staff report

SANTA CRUZ — Firefighters with the Santa Cruz Fire Department will soon be moving into temporary quarters while the department's three stations undergo a year of renovation.

The \$3 million upgrade was approved in 1998 by city voters with passage of Measure G. The funding also allows for a remodel of the department's administrative office at 230 Walnut Ave., Fire Chief Ron Prince said.

Modular homes were delivered last week near each of the stations. Crews are currently installing emergency radio equipment and utilities. Firefighters are expected to move in within a month and live in the quarters — their home away from home — for at least a year, Prince said.

Fire engines also will be relocated near the housing so emergency response times will not be delayed, Prince said.

Improvements to the stations include seismic retrofitting, fire sprinkler installation, and modernizing bathrooms and dorm areas.

"These are modest improvements, but they are necessary," Prince said. "It will be a much more modern place to work."

The department's stations — built between 1939 and 1954 — are at 335 Younglove Ave., 711 Center St., and 1103 Soquel Ave.

Prince expects to receive bids for the project by Wednesday and will ask the Santa Cruz City Council to award the contract in July.

The stations will undergo asbestos abatement before construction begins this summer, Prince said.

The modular housing was purchased by the department and will be sold to the city's Public Works Department for use at the landfill when work at the stations is complete, Prince said.

Manny Moreno finishes off the stairway to new, temporary firefighter quarters across Center Street from the main Santa Cruz firehouse.



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel