

Aptos assesses vandalism damage

By **MAY WONG**
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APTOS — Owners of Seascape Village businesses attacked by vandals over the weekend assessed the damage Monday, and were thankful the taggers got caught.

"It's major," said Chuck Holcomb of Holcomb Corp., owner of the upscale outdoor shopping center at Seascape Boulevard and Sumner Avenue.

In all, 52 windows and five mirrors at a dozen businesses were scratched up, Holcomb said. Sheriff's deputies estimated it would cost at least \$10,000 to replace them, but Holcomb, after a visit

by two glass companies Monday, said the bill may run a bit lower than that.

The damage, however, runs deeper than the scratches.

"It drags down the shopping center and the perception of quality and good clean design," Holcomb said.

The vandalism occurred Saturday evening, apparently after all of the businesses except for Palapas Restaurant and Cantina had closed. At about 9 p.m., an employee at the restaurant noticed two youths loitering and alerted authorities.

The sheriff's Special Enforcement Team arrested the pair — a 15-year-old

and 17-year-old — after they emerged from an area freshly marked by graffiti.

The District Attorney's Office filed felony vandalism charges against them Monday.

According to sheriff's deputies, both confessed. They also were linked to spray-paint vandalism at Seascape Resort earlier in the week.

Deputies said the younger of the two had been arrested a month earlier on suspicion of extensive tagging throughout Seascape and Rio del Mar. His alleged monikers then were "CDS" (Criminal Deviance Society) and "PHER."

Most merchants at Seascape Village viewed the latest tagging spree as a sad sign of the times.

"We were all kids before, but destroying property for the sake of destroying property ... that's a crazy thing to do. We weren't angels, but we didn't do that," said Guerin Gates, owner of Palapas Restaurant and Cantina.

"It seems so unnecessary," said Vince Bruno of Bruno's Seascape Market & Deli. "I don't know what they get out of it."

Owners of property that has been defaced with the "CDS" tag are asked to contact the Sheriff's Office at 454-2311