

County employees 'frightened' about possible layoffs this fall

By LANE WALLACE
STAFF WRITER

The news that about 50 Santa Cruz County employees are facing layoffs has made some workers "pretty frightened," a union representative said this morning.

For those facing layoffs, "it's a major trauma," said Dave Morales, field representative for the Service Employees International Union which represents about 1,600 of the county's 2,260 workers.

The county will have to cut 101 jobs to balance the budget in the coming fiscal year, County Administrative Officer Susan Mauriello said in presenting a proposed budget to county supervisors yesterday.

By leaving some positions vacant, only about 50 jobs will be "impacted," Mauriello said, refusing to use the word layoff.

Morales said some workers were "totally surprised" at the impending layoffs, despite the ongoing publicity about the budget problems of the county and other government agencies.

There have been a lot of rumors about the proposed cuts, said Morales, who has called a meeting of shop stewards later this week to give them the latest information.

The union is concerned, Morales said, because the proposed budget doesn't call for eliminating many management or middle-management positions.

"We'd like the supervisors to take a close look and re-examine the management structure," he said.

Mauriello told supervisors the county's financial situation could worsen if the state budget shortage is greater than anticipated. A

large portion of county funds are doled out by the state.

Morales praised county officials for making an effort to let workers know what will happen. Any layoffs won't come until Sept. 1, and those laid off will get assistance in finding new jobs.

Kids' fishing derby set for June 6

The Pinto Lake Kids Fishing Derby will be held June 6 from 7:30 a.m. to noon.

The free event, for youngsters under 16, is sponsored by the Watsonville Recreation and Parks Department. Prizes will be awarded for the largest fish caught in several age categories.

For more information, call 728-6167.