

Earthquake 1989 -  
**Ford's lawsuit  
trial under way  
in Santa Cruz** p-9  
City of Santa Cruz  
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The owner of the building that collapsed onto Ford's department store in Santa Cruz in the 1989 earthquake ignored warnings about unstable walls, an attorney for Ford's said at trial today.

Plaza Books owner Hal Morris "did nothing" about warnings that began soon after he bought the building in 1976, attorney James Burns said in opening statements in the trial of Ford's civil suit against Plaza Books. The case is being heard before Superior Court Judge Tom Black.

The south wall of Plaza Books, which Burns said was unreinforced brick, fell through the roof of Ford's on Oct. 17, 1989. One customer was killed and an employee, Edith Dominguez, was injured. Dominguez sued Plaza, and settled out of court.

The Ford's store was later demolished; it is now used for a parking lot.

Burns said the Plaza building was in "extremely poor condition" when Morris purchased it. Burns said the building was built in 1908, and that when Morris bought it, the upper floors had last been used in 1959, "as a flophouse."

Defense attorneys had not started their opening statements by presstime.