

# Capitola wharf soon to be in ship shape

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CAPITOLA — Last year, the Capitola wharf got a \$400,000 facelift. This year, workers are back to finish the job.

"It will look a lot nicer," said Ed Burrell of Capitola Boat and Bait, which is closed until the work is done. "When they finish, the wharf will be nice and smooth."

This year's project involves replacing the deck area from where workers stopped last year to the Wharfhouse restaurant. Bugler Construction of Fremont, the low bidder, is doing the job for about \$108,000.

The work, which started Monday, is supposed to take about 25 days, but it could take longer, depending on weather. Last year's repairs kept the wharf closed through most of June.

Burrell is hopeful the job will wrap up on schedule.

"The guys are working out in the rain," he said.

Capitola Public Works Director Fred Braun estimates the total cost will be about \$130,000. The city will pay only about \$10,000. The rest will come from a \$120,000

grant from the Coastal Conservancy to improve public access to the seashore.

Wharf improvements were a high priority for residents who were surveyed by the city five years ago.

However, the finishing touch — a decorative wharf gate designed last year by an Aptos artist — has been shelved for the time being because of the pricetag. The gate was supposed to cost about \$50,000, but only one engineering company bid on it, and Braun predicted the overall cost might reach \$120,000.

City Councilman Dennis Norton, who had pushed for the gate, surprised his colleagues Thursday night when he suggested putting the work on hold until budget discussions take place.

"It's way beyond what I expected," Norton said.

As an alternative, the council is looking into installing a serviceable gate that would solve security problems yet enable people to fish on the wharf this summer.

Gate or no gate, Burrell can't wait to get customers back on the wharf.

"You're missing the best part of Capitola," he said.



Martin Vasquez trims a plank to size Friday as part of an overhaul of the Capitola wharf.

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