

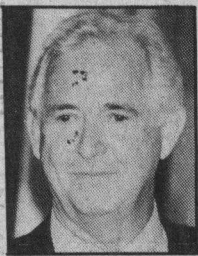
# Countywide teen curfew proposed by supervisor

By KATHY KREIGER  
Sentinel staff writer

4/25/95  
SANTA CRUZ — Say you're under 18 and headed out for the evening. What time you have to be home depends on what part of the county you're going to.

Aptos Supervisor Walt Symons wants to clear up the confusion with a uniform county-wide curfew.

"A countywide curfew ordinance ... could help alleviate much of the graffiti, vandalism and theft problems occurring in our community," said Symons in a letter to his colleagues on the county Board of Supervisors. "(It) could also help in the prevention of juveniles becoming victims."



**Symons**  
Right now, the county and its four cities handle the issue in very different ways.

Capitola says minors have to be home by 11 p.m., but Watsonville says they can have another hour before they're violating its curfew.

Scotts Valley says midnight, too, but sets a separate 10 p.m. curfew for those 14 and under, unless they have a valid reason to be out.

All the cities allow minors to be out past curfew if they're on their way home from a job or legitimate function, or are with an adult. The city of Santa Cruz has a curfew on the books, but police don't enforce it because the city attorney says it's probably unconstitutional.

Other cities with curfew laws similar to Santa Cruz's 1985 ordinance have had problems defending theirs when challenged, said John Barisone, attorney for the city of Santa Cruz.

"That indicated to us that if our ordinance was challenged, it would have the same problems," Barisone said.

*Please see CURFEW — BACK PAGE*

## Curfew is

*Continued from Page A1*

He wrote a new curfew law for the city last year. It was rejected by the City Council, Barisone said, because of the potential impact on under-age UC Santa Cruz students.

The council did not ask Barisone to rewrite the proposed law and bring it back.

"It's a policy decision at this point," Barisone said.

Prompted by several neighborhood groups in his unincorporated area, Symons has suggested handing the issue over to the countywide Criminal Justice Council.

If at least two other supervisors agree today, supervisors would ask the justice group to look into the possibility of a county-wide time

for minors to be home.

Cities that enforce their curfew laws notice a big difference, according to Deputy Chief Jeff Locke of the Santa Cruz police department. "They see a dramatic drop in criminal activity."

Other local police agreed.

"We believe it's had a positive effect," said Scotts Valley Police Chief Steve Walpole, whose department began a zero-tolerance enforcement policy of its curfew laws 18 months ago. "We think it's one of the elements that has reduced graffiti."

Teens picked up in Scotts Valley are taken to the lobby of the police station and their parents are called

to come down and pick them up.

"Parents tell us it's right on track, even those we've had to call," Walpole said. "Often times they weren't aware of (where their child was)."

Besides different hours, the cities have different ways to handle the violations. Watsonville, like Scotts Valley, makes teens wait at a recreation center until their parents come to get them. But in Capitola, alleged curfew violators are issued a citation.

A uniform policy makes sense, Walpole said. "It's a small county. You drive from one city to another city. I think they ought to be the same."