

# Summit residents mired in troubles

By TOM LONG,  
Sentinel staff writer

SUMMIT — Homes are still falling apart in this mountain community, which has been isolated by hundreds of tons of landslide rubble blocking roads, and devastated by fire and the big quake's aftershocks.

Some homes have been split entirely in half, others have tumbled down hillsides. Six homes caught fire immediately after Tuesday's quake, according to California Department of Forestry spokesman Dick Craig, and four of those were destroyed.

And many people have had to abandon homes that are still standing.

"Some of the homes just can't be lived in," said Craig.

Geologists say they still do not know exactly where the earthquake originated but that it was in the Summit area.

Huge cracks, some as deep as 6 feet, run along ridges throughout the Summit area, crossing streets and running directly beneath homes.

Building inspectors roamed the area Friday, placing red flags in front of homes that would have to be condemned and destroyed. PG&E workers went around turning off power to those homes even as residents rushed to pull out their

possessions before the buildings caved in.

Craig said some 20 people were flown out of the Summit area Tuesday night with injuries ranging from broken arms and legs to burns. Some 39 people have been staying at a hastily organized Red Cross Shelter at C.T. English School on Summit Road.

Many people throughout the area and along Old San Jose Road have been camping out in front of their destroyed or damaged homes, some waiting to find out if the homes are safe, others waiting until they can find new places to live.

Ron Sullivan was still staying in his condemned Laurel Road home with his two children and his mother-in-law Saturday morning. He had been walking outside to his truck when the quake hit.

"I started hearing the rumbling first, then I started to run a little bit and then it just threw me up in the air," Sullivan said. "I looked at the ground around me and it just started cracking.

"I ran to the house and had to kick down the front door, which had stuck," Sullivan said. "I grabbed my little girl from the bathroom and then got to my little boy, who was underneath the laundry room sink. Glass had shattered above him and cut him up."

After Sullivan got his family out of the house he looked around the

area and found a massive mudslide just a few hundred yards from his house. "Nobody could have been alive under there," he said.

Sullivan and his neighbors all camped outside for the first days after the quake, rolling with the aftershocks, barbecuing meals. "We went into the house just to get some clothing and food at first," Sullivan said.

But come Saturday's rain, Sullivan's family was back inside the condemned house while he phoned around trying to find a new place to rent. Thursday's aftershock had sent a crack through the house's ceiling and Sullivan was understandably nervous.

But then, nerves were on end everywhere in the area as the rain began to fall. A group of seismologists and scientists examined the quake area Friday afternoon, trying to determine precisely where the earthquake was centered, but the numbers of cracks in the earth frustrated their efforts.

"A clearly defined and unambiguous surface rupture from the ... earthquake has not yet been located," said UCSC Earth Sciences Professor Gary Griggs.

"We've seen a process happen that I'm not familiar with, where the tops of ridges have received a lot of the intensity, where they've been broken by fissures and cracks," Griggs said.