

Santa Cruz Sentinel

134th Year No. 95

Sunday, April 22, 1990 Santa Cruz, Calif.

Copyright © 1990
Santa Cruz Sentinel Publishers

\$1

Asbestos will close library for month

By GUY LASNIER
Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — The downtown Santa Cruz library will close for more than a month beginning May 2 for asbestos removal, Library Director Anne Turner announced.

Turner said there are no alternatives to closing the largest and busiest branch of the city-county library system during the month-long project. It is scheduled to reopen Monday, June 4.

"No librarian likes to shut down a library," Turner said. "It's heartbreaking.

But we've got to deal with asbestos."

She said building security and the fact the main computer won't be accessible are the main reasons for closing.

"We cannot secure the building," Turner said. "It's too big of a security problem."

Other branches will remain open, Turner said. But there is a risk. If the computer in the main branch breaks during the project, all other branches will have to close.

Members of the Library Oversight Committee were unaware of the proposed

closure until notified Friday. The committee, composed of two representatives each from the Santa Cruz City Council and Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and a private citizen, never discussed the closure, Chairwoman Robley Levy said.

The committee has jurisdiction over changes in hours, Levy said. "It certainly is something that should be discussed," she said.

A special committee meeting has been called for 7:30 p.m. Monday, Levy said.

Turner said asbestos, which can cause respiratory disease, is contained in fire-

proofing materials, insulation and heating ducts in the 25-year-old building. Harmful asbestos particles can be released — and were — during severe shaking, as in the Oct. 17 earthquake. Turner said library air quality was tested after the earthquake and declared safe. But another quake could cause further hazards, requiring the building to close.

The project will cost \$83,000 and is eligible for a 75 percent reimbursement, \$62,250, from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Turner said. She hopes to receive state funds for the remaining 25

percent.

The asbestos removal had to proceed first so other earthquake recovery jobs could be completed. Turner said book shelves will be replaced with earthquake-safe shelves during the month the library is closed.

The library is handing out leaflets explaining the closure and asking that all books be returned after June 4. From now until May 2, books will carry a return date of after June 4.

Please see **LIBRARY** — A24

Library/ Other branches depend on main computer

Continued from Page A1

Turner said the 60 full- and part-time staff members will work out of other branches during the closure. The eight other branches will remain open as long as the computer system is operating, Turner said.

But if the computer breaks down, all branches will be forced to close until the central branch reopens, Turner said. All transactions are computerized, Turner said. The smaller libraries could check out books manually but it would create a daunting project to enter accumulated data into the system later, she said.

The computer is located on the second floor of the downtown branch. It runs terminals at the other branches, Turner said. The computer is in a storage room that will have to be sealed for the duration of the removal project, an estimated 25 days, she said.

A library staffer must have access to the computer for it to operate terminals at the main branch.

The project will proceed more quickly in other work areas on the first floor. Turner said she hopes staff members will be able to return May 7 as long as tests show air quality is safe. But the public will not be allowed in.