

# Miffed mall tenants want to return

*Earthquake 1989 - City of Santa Cruz*

## Togo's freezer holds ton of rotting meat

By GUY LASNIER  
Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — Frustration is growing among tenants in downtown buildings whose offices are behind chain link fences but who are anxious to get back to work.

Monday morning, the owner of the Old Theater Building and several of his tenants stormed into City Manager Richard Wilson's office, complaining that their building was safe but they were still restricted from entering. They were upset because the fence was moved last week allowing some businesses on their street to open but not theirs.

"We heard the squeaky wheel gets the grease," said jeweler Stephan Sternat, whose shop at 102 Walnut Ave. is behind the fence. "We're here squeaking because we want some grease."

Building owner Lorenz Rotherbucher said he hasn't been able to get through to the Public Works Department for an explanation.

An elaborate schedule has been worked out for merchants and others to get inside their buildings this week beginning today. The schedule goes block by block.

Steve Kurtz, a photographer whose office is above Sternat's shop, said he and other tenants were being penalized for being in a safe building.

"The earthquake did a lot of damage but the red tape may be the death blow," Kurtz said.

Wilson explained the re-entry schedule was planned around the schedule for demolition of red-tagged buildings.

Sternat set up a card table at Walnut Avenue and Cedar Street to advertise his presence. He hung a white bed sheet from the fence with the message "Stephan's is staying" sprayed on it red paint. By 2:30 p.m., Sternat had collected about 20 signatures on a petition to open Walnut Avenue.

"I'm not down on the city," he said, "but let's get back to business."

Part of the problem is the number of businesses and the particular circumstances surrounding each one.

A case in point: Jeff Carver, owner of the Togo's Eatery franchise on Pacific Avenue, said he has between 1,500 to 2,000 pounds of meat in a walk-in freezer that has been rotting since the earthquake, when the power was shut off. Carver is not scheduled to get in to clean up the mess until the end of the week.

"I understand the logistics of the thing," he said. "I just want to get the



Dan Covro/Sentinel

Jeweler Steve Sternat, who vows he won't be displaced from Pacific Garden Mall, seeks support Monday.

stuff out of there," he said. Carver said the rotting food is a health hazard.

So far, everyone he has called has said "they would get back to me."

"I know they're doing the best they can," Carver said. "But a lot of stuff is falling through the cracks."

Demolition continued Monday with the destruction of the Hihn Building that housed Gergen's Hallmark Shop and Royal Dry Cleaners on the ground floor at Lincoln Street and Pacific Avenue. The Moderne Life building at 1531 Pacific Ave. also fell. The Cooper House and the old portion of Spodick's General Furniture Co. were destroyed last week.

Other businesses in buildings scheduled for demolition are: Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz Coffee Roasting Company, Santa Cruz Hardware, Dr. Zwerling's optometry office, Gold Camel, and Chi Pants on Pacific Avenue; and Shandrydan and Shens Gallery, on Cooper Street.

Scheduled to fall on Pacific Avenue between Church Street and Walnut Avenue are Sparkle, Body Options, Angelica's and Robert's Leathers and the offices above them. Between Lincoln and Cathcart Street, Pipeline, Logo's Books and Records, and Plaza Books/Paper Visions will also fall to the wrecker's ball.

Owners of other buildings are evaluating reports from engineers before deciding whether to repair or demolish and rebuild.

Also seriously damaged are the Trust Building on Soquel Avenue and the old County Bank Building at Cooper Street and Pacific Avenue.



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

Quake-damaged building that housed Moderne Life comes down