



Fernwood Drive in Boulder Creek area washed out, leaving this parked truck clinging to the pavement.

Pete Amos/Sentinel

More rain and waves

By MARK BERGSTROM
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Just moments after thousands of Santa Cruz area residents had celebrated the end of the Korean War in the final episode of the M-A-S-H television series, the latest Pacific storm opened fire with furious wind and torrential rain.

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It was not an ambush — residents had been warned since early Monday morning to expect the strongest storm to date. The National Weather Service in Redwood City had posted a flash flood watch for the county because the brunt of the storm appeared headed for the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Forecasters had predicted the storm to hit by early afternoon, but later said it had stalled and could be expected by nightfall. It hit shortly after 11 p.m. and brought the strongest winds and heaviest rains, punctuated by lightning and thunder, about 1:30 this morning.

Despite all its fury, the storm caused surprisingly little damage during the night. However, as rain continued this morning and a wind- and wave-whipped high tide moved in shortly before noon, more reports of problems came in.

Along the coast late this morning, waves again battered the coastline, hitting the first floor of homes and apartments along Aptos Beach Drive. One resident remaining there said, "It's too late to evacuate."

One sightseer reported a breaking wave hit the second story of one apartment. Beach Road was under a few inches of ocean and rainwater and a few logs were floating around. Deputies and the highway patrol were trying to keep the area clear and get cars removed from the street.

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Bear Creek Road, just north of Boulder Creek, may be closed for days after a large slide came down this morning cutting it in two at Kelly Hill Road. The slide is about 100 feet at the base.

Fernwood Drive off Bear Creek Road lost a portion of roadway in a slide that took out a culvert. It hung a pickup truck over the chasm and county crews were out trying to clear the road.

Close to a dozen other roads were closed this morning due to downed trees and slides.

The saturated ground and high winds toppled numerous power lines and as of 8:30 this morning some 2,100 PG&E customers were in the dark.

Most of the outages came in the normal trouble spots: Bonny Doon, Ben Lomond

and upper Boulder Creek. Loren Ingols of PG&E said crews were due to get help from outside the county to help restring the downed lines.

"We hope to get all the service restored by nightfall if we don't have any new problems," Ingols said.

Two homes on Pleasure Point Drive suffered major damage at around 6:30 p.m. Winds, gusting as high as 70 mph, lifted up a wood and glass enclosed porch at 3034 Pleasure Point Drive and carried it over two houses before dropping the debris in the street. Another porch was carried over a house and dropped onto a truck.

At about the same time, a Pleasure Point woman reported a hot wire fell across the trunk of her car as she went to open the trunk. The woman said she probably would have been electrocuted had not her companion acted like Charles Bronson and pushed her to safety.

Saturated hillsides came down in several areas of the county. A major slide Monday night closed Old San Jose Road some 7¼ miles above Soquel.

Commute traffic over Highway 17 was stopped early this morning by several slides across both north and southbound lanes on the Los Gatos side of the hill.

Department reported an inch of rain fell in that area after midnight. Despite the downpour and high winds, Aptos Fire Department didn't get a call, Kerr reported.

Capitola Police Officer Todd Mayer said the brunt of the rain fell from 1:30 to 2 a.m., but he reported only "minimal" flooding in the lowlands around the Esplanade.

Heaviest rainfall, as expected, was in the San Lorenzo Valley. Boulder Creek reported 4.40 inches for the 24-hour period which ended at 8 a.m., bringing the season total to 81.16 inches. February rainfall totalled 28 inches.

Despite the rain and gusting winds Monday, Loch Lomond Reservoir opened for trout and bass season on schedule today. Ranger Len Lofano said "There were 15 hardy souls waiting at the gate at 6 a.m. when the park opened and right now (10:30 a.m.) there's around 40 to 50 fishermen out there."

Statewide, the rampaging Sacramento River and the flash-flooded creeks that feed it drove about 100 people from their homes today in Tehama County and knocked out a major railroad bridge as a statewide storm pounded the area with more than 2 inches of rain in a day.

Red Bluff, where Reed Creek erupted over its banks to inundate a low-income area, said police dispatcher Susan Myers. She said about 60 people were evacuated in the city about 115 miles north of Sacramento.

The National Guard was called in to help rescue people along the Sacramento, said Tehama County Undersheriff Mike Blanus. The National Weather Service expected the river to crest at 6 feet above flood stage this morning in the town of Tehama.

Rainfall reports for 24 hours ending at 8 a.m. today and including the season's totals (since July 1) and those of last year at this time, are as follows:

	24 Hrs.	Season	Last Year
Aptos	1.82	31.59	32.34
Ben Lomond	3.88	70.60	
Bonny Doon	3.01	64.44	62.66
Boulder Creek	4.40	81.16	68.31
Capitola	1.93	38.57	35.22
Corralitos	2.09	38.67	37.30
Freedom	1.96	30.93	28.55
Empire Grade	2.70	73.93	74.22
Felton	2.31	60.60	54.23
Graham Hill	1.75	48.85	46.60
Happy Valley	3.05	58.05	57.0
Natural Bridges	1.03	27.72	25.80
Pine Flat	3.96	84.82	74.12
Rio del Mar	1.91	33.39	
Santa Cruz	2.04	34.15	33.57
Soquel	1.69	36.61	37.08
Swanton	1.15	38.14	36.95



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

TV newsman Phil Gomez pinned to beachfront home by Beach Drive wave.