



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

Bookkeeper Leslee Long takes a typewriter to her car from her earthquake-damaged office in Aptos Village, which has been closed.

Aptos Village still off-limits

By JAMIE S. CACKLER
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APTOS — Traffic resumed on Soquel Drive in front of teetering Aptos Village shops Monday, but the shops remained closed because officials fear they could tumble into the ravine behind.

The shops — which include Aptos Village Garage, Aptos Village Market and Dry Goods stores, Sparrow restaurant and the Monterey Bay Business Advisers office — sit on wood pilings perched over the deep ravine of Aptos Creek.

During last Tuesday's 6.9 earthquake, the pilings stood firm, but the buildings' foundations jumped around on top of the pilings, leaving several of the buildings cracked and leaning at ominous angles, said members of the family that owns the row.

The buildings, from the Exxon gas station to the Sparrow restaurant, are owned by 100-year-old Paul Johnston and his daughter, Salinas resident Anne Standal.

Johnston's granddaughter, Leela Standal, said inspectors told her soil studies must be done on the ground beneath the buildings, and

many inspections of the foundations and the buildings themselves must be done before they'll determine whether the buildings must be demolished.

The latest building to be targeted for closure was the gas station and garage.

Although the western-most stalls of the garage are on solid ground, the rest is shakier, Standal said.

The gas station was also ordered to drain its gasoline reserves for safety's sake, just in case the commercial row tumbles, said Darrell Correia, part owner of the Village Garage business.

To comply with that order, Correia said owners decided to drop the price of their gas to 90 cents a gallon, and were giving away gasoline to all emergency agencies and charities, such as fire departments, police, Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Food and Nutrition Services.

By 2 p.m., Correia said the reserves were halfway drained.

On Saturday, police closed the stretch of Soquel Drive in front of the row of shops, fearing the shops would fall and take part of the street down, too.

Cracks have formed all over the

street, with many deep cracks running the length of the street and following the path of recent road work.

Leela Standal said the family will be closely examining the road work and role it may have played in the damage to the stores.

Trenches were dug in the street for repair or replacement of pipes. Standal said crews poured new fill into the trenches when they were finished, and then repaved the area.

Portions of the some of the shops, such as the grocery store, are solid, while just yards away, other portions are obviously wrecked.

Some stores have been "red tagged" by county inspectors, meaning that no one may enter them, while others carry only a yellow

tag, warning that they may be entered with caution on a limited basis.

A small handwritten note was left on the door of the red-tagged Montad Furnishings store. "Please call before demolishing," it said, listing three emergency phone numbers.

Standal's grandfather, who until recently lived in the house next door to the shops, now lives in a nearby convalescent hospital.

Standal said Johnston is aware of the damage to his home and commercial property and hopes it won't be demolished. She said he has been philosophical about the quake. "He lived through the 1906 earthquake in Capitola, and he told me the 1906 earthquake was worse."

SV Council meets to discuss quake

SCOTTS VALLEY — The Scotts Valley City Council will discuss the city's earthquake emergency situation at a 4 p.m. Wednesday meeting.

The council will also resume the meeting agenda planned for last Wednesday. The agenda includes

discussion of a consultants study of efficiency in the city Planning Department and plans for the Scotts Valley RV Park, which was recently purchased by the city.

The meeting will take place at City Hall, One Civic Center L.