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SANTA CRUZ — Enough buildings to form a small city have been reduced to rubble and trucked to the Santa Cruz city dump in the last six weeks — and the amount of debris may shorten the lifespan of the landfill.

"We're up to our elbows in debris and we won't be near the end for another 30 to 60 days," said Bill Lorentz, who supervises the dump and city garbage collection. "We can see a substantial difference. It seems to grow daily."

All of the debris from fallen and demolished buildings in Santa Cruz have been trucked to the landfill and Lorentz said that the dump has been filling at more than five times its normal rate. City crews have been working overtime seven days a week to handle the increased loads.

City officials won't know how much earthquake rubble has been dumped until an aerial survey of the landfill is done this summer.

The landfill was expected to meet city needs for another 20 years, but that may be shortened by more than a year by the mountains of earthquake debris, officials say.

Several more large demolition projects, including the Riverside Bridge, and possibly the St. George Hotel, have yet to be done.

The razing of shops, some filled with merchandise, attracted a handful of scavengers who hoped to find undamaged merchandise in the debris. They were told to leave the dump and



Bill Lovejoy/Sen

Sections of downtown Santa Cruz, reduced to rubble since the quake, have been trucked to the city dump.

## Santa Cruz dump swells with earthquake rubble

Lorentz said that there was little of value left in the rubble.

"By the time we got a hold of it it had been thoroughly demolished by tractors and trucked in," he said. "I didn't see anything of particular value. We did bury a lot of bricks."

By the time the debris reached the dump it was little more than dirty piles of plaster, bricks and boards with shredded fabric and garbage mixed in.

Scavengers of a different sort — seagulls which populate the dump — were less than pleased by the debris.

"The seagulls don't like it," Lorentz said. "The seagulls know garbage and they know debris. They go for the garbage."

Fears of asbestos pollution were also raised by the demolition and dumping of buildings which may have contained

the dangerous substance in their construction.

An Environmental Protection Agency team tested the air for asbestos at the dump about two weeks ago. Lorentz said that measurable amounts of asbestos were found, but that it was not a health hazard according to EPA standards.

"It was substantially below the action point," Lorentz said. "We would be able to detect asbestos out there on an average day. People do discard asbestos and it goes in the landfill."

The city does not allow the discarding of asbestos or toxic chemicals at the dump, but Lorentz says it is often contained in household dump loads. Asbestos often is found in building materials and other items such as automobile brake shoes.

REFERENCE

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