

Heavy Rain Drenches Area

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The heaviest rain storm since 1969 hit the Santa Cruz area Friday night and early Saturday morning, destroying two homes and forcing the evacuation of a Live Oak mobile home park.

Santa Cruz weatherman Ron MacDonald reported 4.14 inches in the 24-hour period ending 8 a.m. Saturday. Another .15 fell before 5 p.m. Saturday. That is the heaviest downpour since Jan. 13, 1969 when Santa Cruz received 4.65 inches. The total for the first 12 days of January was 7.21 inches, he added, ahead of the 6.73 inches that is normal for the entire month.

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Area fire departments were besieged by calls from residents whose homes were flooding. Homes in Santa Cruz and in Paradise Park on Highway 9 were totally destroyed and another home in the upper Soquel Valley was damaged, but there were no reports of injuries.

Soquel Fire Captain Steve VandDenHeuvel estimated that a home at 403 Laurel Glen Road home, off Old San Jose Road above Soquel, slid 100 yards. Residents Climbing Sun and Starla Wintergreen clamored to safety.

The 10:34 p.m. incident occurred

when mud caused the swimming pool, which was higher on the hill than the home, to crack. The "waterfall of water," explained VanDenHeuvel, proceeded downhill wiping out the home's support structures.

The Paradise Park home on Keystone Avenue, owned by Vance Haswell, collapsed just after 11 p.m. Friday. According to Captain Bud Finch of the state Division of Forestry, a mud slide caused a tree to fall across the residence, with mud then oozing through the structure.

A house at 820 Brookside Drive, Felton, was "flattened" by another mud slide and slid about 60 feet, said Felton Fire Chief Mac McDonnell. "The people who were renting the house were just driving home Friday night when it occurred," said McDonnell. "They couldn't get to it because their house was blocking the road."

One of the residents of the home, Mary Ann Koltko, said everything was lost. Anyone wishing to help can call Koltko at 429-8858.

Live Oak firemen, with direction from county Emergency Services Director Leroy Vernon and assistance from the local Red Cross, used boats to evacuate 17 residents of Blue and Gold Star Mobile Home Park, 1255 38th Ave. Some mobile homes toward the back of the park had water waist

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deep, said Live Oak Fire Captain Chuck Illidge.

Evacuation measures lasted from 9:13 to 11:41 p.m., he added, as firemen moved from coach to coach in boats. The flooding was due to low elevation and a backup in the drainage system.

Only one of the 17 evacuated residents opted for transportation to a motel, explained local Red Cross chapter manager Nel Arnott, who was on the scene. The others waited it out in the park's recreation hall until 1 a.m. Saturday.

For resident Miriam Pattee, this was the third flood at the park she has been in, but it wasn't the worst. She noted residents had to wade through foot-high water to get back to their homes.

"We took our car and moved it to higher ground at around 7:30 when we saw the creek overflowing," she said. "The place looks like a disaster area. People were out looking for their garbage cans and potted plants this morning. They just floated away during the storm."

Beth Cave was one of the park's

luckier residents. She did not have to be evacuated since "the water only came up to my third step," she added.

At one point Friday night, Capitola Police were forced to close 38th Avenue because of flooding. Numerous other roads in the county were also closed due to flooding, cave-ins and mud slides.

CalTrans spokesman Paul Johnson reported mud slides "all over the place." He did note, though, that no major problems occurred except that his department was a little short of manpower. Branciforte Fire Chief Dale Thomas added, "I don't know of any roads that didn't get mud slides."

Closed roads at press time included: Valencia Road, Laurel Glen Road, Redwood Drive, Lakeview Drive, Lee Road, White Road and Murphy Crossing.

Other roads closed at one time or another during the downpour included Rodeo Gulch, Granite Creek, Jarvis Road, Branciforte Drive and the upper end of Main Street (near Sevilla Drive) in Soquel. Some temporary lane closures on Highway 17 between Scotts Valley and Los Gatos also

occurred as crews cleaned up mud.

Bill Baxter, district customer services supervisor for PG&E, reported that 5,000 Scotts Valley homes were without power for two to 4½ hours Friday night due to trees that downed lines on Glen Canyon Road and knocked out a main circuit. Power was restored by 11:16 p.m.

An additional 450 homes were still without power Saturday afternoon. Areas affected, added Baxter, were in the Forest Lake, Laurel Glen, Paradise Park and Love Creek areas.

	24 Hours	Season	Last Year
Santa Cruz	4.29	20.32	13.04
Scotts Valley	4.65	27.34	16.01
Rio del Mar	3.21	17.53	10.52
Boulder Creek	4.55	32.25	17.40
Natural Bridges	1.87	15.58	7.96
Happy Valley	5.1	30.00	17.51
Graham Hill	5.55	28.15	16.60
Bonny Doon	6.52	31.67	21.21
Swanton	3.07	19.18	10.69
Capitola	3.62	20.33	11.54
Soquel	3.75	18.98	12.86
Lompico	3.70	29.75	14.50
Ben Lomond	5.00	30.35	19.50
Felton	5.50	30.47	23.05
Aptos	3.52	16.81	11.38