

✓ TOWN CLOCK

Town Clock hours set to halt 24-hour vigil

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New operating hours at the Town Clock in Santa Cruz will begin next Wednesday, with violators who congregate or sleep at the familiar monument between 1 a.m. and 8 a.m. subject to a \$60 fine.

In response to public outcry over a cluttered three-month peace vigil at the clock, the city's parks and recreation commission Monday established the restrictions over the protests of several homeless activists.

Tuesday, parks director Jim Lang said he had begun drafting a letter to the city council on what his staff planned to do.

Parks staff will make metal signs announcing the hours and post them on nearby utility poles or posts, similar to signs at other city parks facilities.

"We'll probably make several because I have a feeling they're going to disappear," Lang said.

The parks commission also will be organizing a three-member subcommittee it created Monday to talk with the half-dozen protesters. Several of the protesters, who say they will not leave the clock until there is world peace, stormed out of the parks commission Monday shouting.

City Attorney John Barisone said that under the city's municipal code, inhabiting park after hours is an infraction. Park rangers or police issue \$60 citations for violations.

Challenging the ticket and going in court can bring an additional fine up to \$138, Barisone added.