

REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

Watsonville, Calif., Thursday, October 19, 1989

Pulitzer Prize, 1956



Ca - S.C. Co.

122nd Year — No. 196

It may not be over yet

By BOB SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Geologists warned this morning that a major aftershock could strike Santa Cruz County in the next week.

Karen McNally, professor of geophysics at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and an adviser to the state Office of Emergency Services, told reporters this morning that another good-sized earthquake could strike the county.

"People should be careful," McNally said, "because we could have an aftershock of 5.8 to 6.0 magnitude."

McNally said geologists are now placing Tuesday's major earthquake at 6.9 on the Richter scale.

"It's unlikely that another earthquake of this size could happen at the same time and same location. But history does show there are anomalies in California," she said.

She told reporters that the epicenter for the 6.9 quake Tuesday was probably in the same area as the 5.2 quake in August — along the San Andreas Fault above Lexington Reservoir. But she added that search teams have been unable to pinpoint the exact point where the ground ruptured. "We are still looking," she added.

Geologists predicted after the August quake that a major quake in the 7.0 range could occur in this area, McNally told reporters.

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Some of the victims have been identified.

Catharine Treiman, 75, of Scotts Valley, died at the Ford's Department Store in Santa Cruz.

Dale DeBenedetti, 27, of Watsonville, died when his car hit three panic-stricken horses on Highway 1 between Bay Avenue and 41st Avenues.

Sean McCormick, 21, no address given, died at the Santa Cruz Coffee Roasting Co. building collapse.

A second victim, tentatively identified as Robin Ortiz, is still under the rubble at the coffee company.

Officials now say that a nursing home death was not related to the quake.

Santa Cruz County hospitals report they treated 85 people with major injuries and 365 with minor injuries. Watsonville Community Hospital is in full operation, county public information officer Dinah Phillips said this morning. She told reporters that the hospital had never been evacuated, but did experience difficulties with its emergency generators before PG&E restored electrical service last night.

County office buildings remained closed to the public today but county workers were asked to report to work to begin cleaning up their offices.

Health clinics at the Emeline Street complex are open.

All courts will remain closed until Monday. All public schools in the county will be closed until Monday.

County building inspectors have counted 201 homes in the unincorporated areas damaged or destroyed.

They said that 72 commercial buildings in the unincorporated areas also received severe damage in the quake.

Fire officials report that there are 15 buildings in the Salsipuedes area with major damage. Several buildings in Aptos's Redwood Village are sliding into Valencia Creek and several others in Aptos Village are slipping into Aptos Creek.

Corralitos has 15 buildings reported as total losses.

There are 40 homes in the Beach Flat area of Santa Cruz destroyed.

The Red Cross has opened seven shelters in Santa Cruz

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County, including the New Brighton Middle School in Capitola.

The latest count this morning showed 742 people in the shelters. County officials estimate, however, that upwards of 10,000 people are homeless today in the county. About 4,800 of those people have sought shelter with neighbors, family or friends.

About 25 elderly and infirm residents of the Casa del Rey retirement home, across the street from the Santa Cruz Boardwalk, were moved out of the three-story hotel today and taken to the Red Cross shelter at the Messiah Lutheran Church in Santa Cruz.

Red Cross officials said they will begin collecting information on possible missing persons 72 hours after the quake occurred.

Limited amounts of drinking water are available for residents without potable water. Residents will be limited to two gallons per person and they should bring their own containers.

Tank trucks are at the following locations:

30th Avenue and Brommer Street, Live Oak.

The Corralitos CDF fire station, 121 Eureka Canyon Road.

County officials said they had received still unconfirmed reports that Pajaro Dunes residents were without water today. "If true," Philips said, "a water tanker will be sent there, too."

"If you don't know if your water is safe, contact your individual water district," Philips added. "If you can not reach them continue boiling your water."

PG&E has restored power to 67,000 of its 96,000 electrical customers in Santa Cruz County, the utility reported this morning. Residents are urged to use their electricity sparingly.

Anyone needing to have PG&E turn their natural gas service on in their homes and businesses must call either 724-4714 or 426-8300. The utility has 85 gas servicemen working in the county to restore gas service but has no way of knowing who needs help unless they call.

State officials now say that Highway 17 between Santa Cruz and Los Gatos will remain closed for several weeks. The road is

blocked, according to County Supervisor Jan Beautz, by a landslide at the Glenwood

Highway 1 remains closed at Harkins Slough with traffic diverted through Watsonville.

Highway 129 is closed.

Highway 152 is open.

Highway 9 is open, but traffic is restricted to one-way traffic through Ben Lomond. The Ben Lomond bridge was closed this morning when cracks were discovered in it and traffic is rerouted over Lower Glen Arbor Road.

San Juan Road from Pajaro to Highway 101 is open but the Main Street bridge over the Pajaro River is closed.

Old San Jose Road from Soquel to the summit is now open but Highway 17 and the Old Santa Cruz Highway in Santa Clara County remain closed.

Rider Road and Hazel Dell Road are now open.

County roads remaining closed include:

- Browns Valley Road, closed to the public — emergency vehicles only.

- Redwood Road in Watsonville.
- Eureka Canyon Road at Rider Road.

- Morrel Road from the Summit to Old San Jose Road.

- East Cliff Drive from Prospect to 7th Avenues.

- Rodeo Gulch Road.
- Summit Road.

Fire officials said this morning the Nisene Marks State Park fire caused by the earthquake was contained, but that it could be several days before it was completely extinguished. The fire is estimated to have burned about 100 acres.

Capt. Mike Conrad, of the Aptos/La Selva fire district, said there have been no structure fires in those areas. Firefighters responded to a lot of calls for natural gas leaks, minor fires started by such means as fallen lamps setting the carpet on fire after power was restored and some fire alarms which proved to be unfounded.

In La Selva Beach, the Oceanview Apartments were evacuated yesterday because of a safety hazard. Most of the stores along the ocean side of Aptos Village have been condemned, Conrad said, and the Loma Linda Apartments in Aptos will likely also be condemned.