

# Aptos board calls meeting on fire code

Enforcement of the Aptos district fire code—at least where fire safety inspections are concerned—has been halted temporarily until fire district directors can sort out the complaints about the code and how it is being applied.

Board chairman Richard Duchscher said the code and how it is being administered will be the major topic of discussion at a board meeting next Tuesday. The meeting will be held at the main Aptos fire station at 7:30 p.m.

Duchscher said letters are being sent to homeowners associations "to invite them personally and make sure they are there." Also invited were representatives from the Poor Clares convent, subject of a safety inspection which resulted in a controversial list of code violations which must be corrected. Among the more volatile of these was the ban on the use of candles in religious processions or in areas accessible to the public.

The meeting is also open to anyone else with an interest in the subject, Duchscher said. "We'll be looking at the code, not

necessarily to change it but how it is being administered," he said.

Duchscher said he considered calling a special meeting of the board to discuss the situation in December, but the holidays made it difficult to get a meeting together.

It is likely Tuesday's meeting will attract a full house because critics of the code have been quite vocal—even to the point where one of them has threatened a recall of the district directors over their support of Fire Chief Richard Chinn's enforcement of the code.

In connection with the Poor Clares incident, Chinn said that the district has had a code since 1965 and that the new one, adopted in 1974, was merely "upgrading it to today's specifications . . . things that have been in the state code for years." There is nothing in the district code, he said, that is not in the state code. "And," he added, "now it is being enforced."

It is the manner of the enforcement that will be discussed at Tuesday's meeting.