

Wormhoudt, Rotkin want nuclear war story told

9/13/82
Sentinel

Santa Cruz residents may open one of their future city utility bills and read a startling pamphlet that tells them the following story:

It is three o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon in Santa Cruz and you are at work. The music on the radio suddenly stops for an emergency news bulletin that tells you a one-megaton nuclear bomb has just exploded in San Francisco.

As the fallout begins its walk of destruction down the coast, you frantically try to decide what to do.

The county's under-sized fallout shelter is crammed, people are fighting at gas stations for the fuel that will give them safety in distance and the survivors from San Francisco begin their trek towards Santa Cruz.

The fallout begins its killing, a death

that comes in a thin layer of dust that's made up of the city's concrete, dirt and human bodies that were vaporized in the holocaust and then blown by a pleasant breeze southward.

That's the message that will be in 20,000 city and nearby areas if Councilwoman Mardi Wormhoudt and Mayor Michael Rotkin get a majority vote Tuesday afternoon.

Wormhoudt says the intent of painting a clear picture of a very possible outcome of the arms race is to sensitize people to do something about it.

The pamphlet urges its readers to write to newspapers and elected officials to call off the arms race, to disarm and to make the world safe for Democracy and Communism.

Councilman John Mahaney agrees that

if a nuclear war occurs, it will be a holocaust that could sweep away all civilizations away.

But, he holds that "it is so horrible, that we just have to trust in our government, and trust that our leaders will not let it happen. No one wants it to happen., but I don't think this approach is the best."

He says the council would be using taxpayers' money better to speak out on traffic accidents and the drunken driver.

"We have more die in traffic accidents than died in Vietnam," Mahaney says.

He also noted that the council majority of Wormhoudt, Rotkin, John Laird and Bruce Van Allen had voted against willing participation of the federal evacuation plan for the San Francisco area.

"I think it would have been smarter to plan for it," he said.

Mahaney's position on the nuclear planning issue was supported by Councilmen Joseph Ghio and Spiro Mellis, and it is possible that will reflect the vote on the nuclear pamphlet.

Wormhoudt and Rotkin state that similar pamphlets were sent out in the county of Marin and in Cambridge, Mass.

"While many people are growing increasingly frightened by the arms race, most of us feel quite powerless in the face of what seems to be an inevitable rush toward world destruction.

"We hope that in giving people solid information on the nuclear issues, we will make it possible for citizens to realistically assess the problem and learn how they can act to influence the policy decisions," Wormhoudt and Rotkin write in their letter to the council.