

Target's ready to open



Early-bird shoppers talk with Target employees outside the new Watsonville store Friday evening. Target's grand opening is scheduled for Sunday.

Store will hold official grand opening Sunday

By VICTORIA MANLEY and
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STAFF WRITERS

WATSONVILLE — The city's newest department store will officially open its doors Sunday, fully stocked to compete in the Central Coast's retail market.

Target, the first store to be opened in the Overlook shopping center on Main Street, will be open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The 104,000-square-foot store is fully stocked with electronics, clothing, home appliances and furnishings, music, stationery, cleaning supplies and other sundries. It also features a photo drop-off station, a snack shop and garden center.

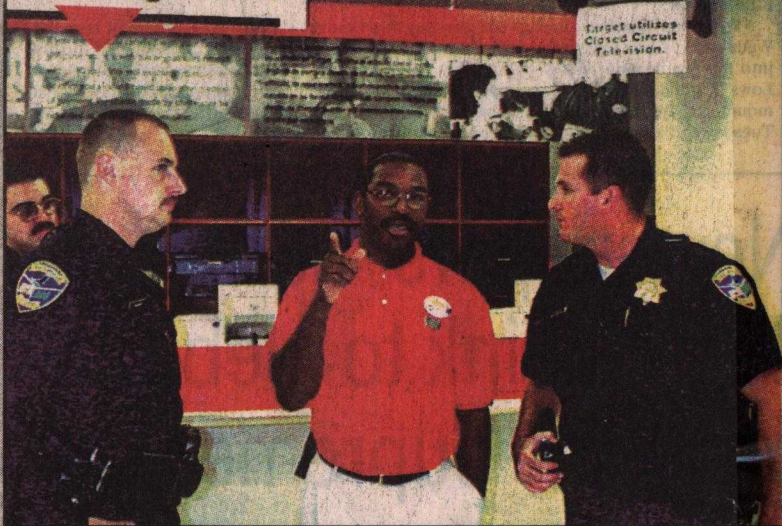
"I'm so glad you opened the store," said shopper Sharon Knudsen Friday afternoon to security worker Rick Clemmons. "I used to drive over to Stevens Creek to shop at the Target over there and now I don't have to anymore," said Knudsen.

Knudsen and other shoppers took advantage of the store's "soft opening" Friday and today, helping to give store personnel practice doing their jobs before the crush of customers arrives at the grand opening Sunday.

In front of the store Friday,

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Exchange Here



Target Asset Protection Team Leader Rick Clemmons (center) explains the store's security system to Watsonville police department officers Lance Stackhouse (left), Mike Walker (left) and others.

Embezzlers, shoplifters targeted by sophisticated technology

By DAVID PACINI

STAFF WRITER

WATSONVILLE — Embezzlers and shoplifters beware: don't target Target's merchandise.

That is, not unless you're pre-

pared to battle what may well be the most elaborate and sophisticated security system in a retail store in Watsonville.

"Gottschalks' security system

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workers offered shoppers free gifts of pens, notebooks, flashlights, and special insulated lunch bags in exchange for applications for the store credit card.

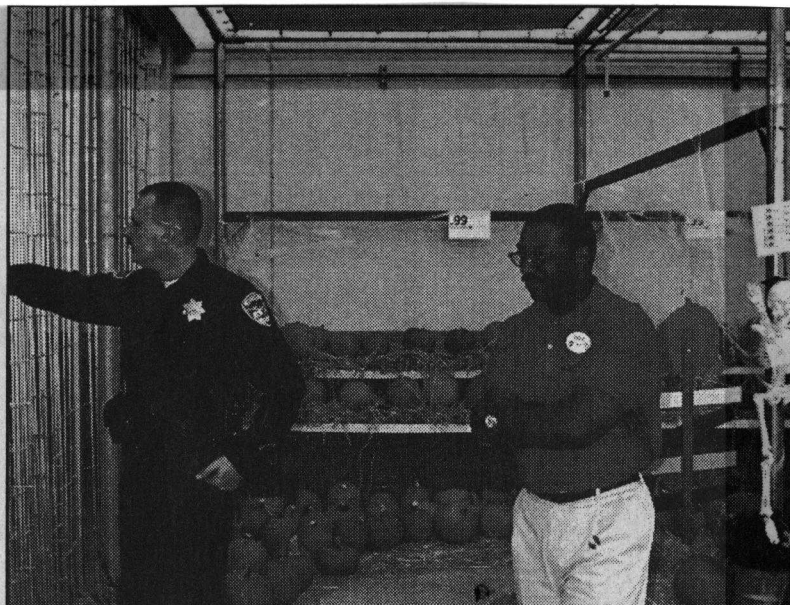
The store is currently stocked with holiday items, including Halloween costumes, candy and decorations.

Most of the 166 employees working for the new store were hired in Watsonville when Target "team leaders" held all-day job fairs earlier this summer interviewing local applicants. The store will eventually employ 200 people.

Target is one of about 25 stores to be eventually located in the shopping center, which is more than 90 percent leased out. Other stores to arrive include Lucky/Sav-on, Longs Drugs, Staples and Starbucks, which are expected to attach to the Target building. Also on the property will be a McDonald's restaurant, 7-Eleven and a Doctors on Duty walk-in clinic.

Target celebrated a VIP grand opening earlier this week, where more than 150 people toured the new store and were able to purchase merchandise for the first time.

The first Target store opened in Southern California in 1983. There are now 144 stores throughout the state, and 851 stores in 41 states across the country.



David Pacini

Watsonville police officer Mike Walker examines the security gate leading to Target's greenhouse area at the new store, while facility security leader Rick Clemmons looks on.

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is pretty close to this," said Watsonville Police Sgt. David McCartney as he toured the facility Friday afternoon. "It's pretty sophisticated."

McCartney was joined by fellow officers Mike Walker, Lee Katich, Lance Stackhouse, and Jose Barrera on a tour of the store and its security apparatus Friday afternoon. The tour, led by Rick Clemmons, Asset Protection Team Leader for the Watsonville Target store, was designed to facilitate crime prevention and detection between the store personnel and local police.

Clemmons started the tour in a small room filled with television monitors fed by video cameras that can be controlled by remote control. The cameras were focused on the store's cash registers and merchandise aisles, while video cassette recorders documented action throughout the store.

Clemmons told officers that he is in the process of hiring an eight-member full-time store security team that will include uniformed workers to stand near the entrance doors as a visual reminder to shop-

lifters that they will be watched.

The security team will also feature "asset protection specialists" whose job it is to watch suspected shoplifters and embezzlers and collect evidence against them.

Closed-circuit television monitors throughout the store retail areas also serve to remind shoplifters that they are being watched and recorded. Signs next to the monitors read "Target utilizes closed circuit TV." Clemmons also said anyone caught shoplifting from the store is not allowed back in the store again.

Clemmons said that embezzlement represents a much bigger problem for retail stores than shoplifting in terms of actual losses.

"The cashiers know cameras are trained on the registers," said Clemmons. "I tell them that in orientation."

McCartney said that police prefer that stores work to document crimes than to try to detain criminals, especially those who are armed.

"Most of their crimes will be property crimes," said McCartney. "As a police department, we don't want them physically going after criminals—that's how people get hurt."