

Few victims seeking help at Summit-area aid center

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SUMMIT — Federal and state Disaster Assistance Center workers are disappointed by the low turnout at the new mobile center stationed at Loma Prieta Community Center, an official said Thursday.

The mobile center will be at the site until 5 p.m. Saturday, but then may move, said public information officer Merl Moore.

Just 63 people showed up Wednesday at the center, stationed at 23800 Summit Road, Moore said.

Often in rural communities, information spreads better through word of mouth, he said. So FEMA

representatives put up posters around the Summit area on Thursday and started contacting groups such as the PTA, clubs and local churches.

Like the other three disaster centers in Santa Cruz, Ben Lomond and Watsonville, the Summit center is run jointly by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the state Office of Emergency Services. The three stationary disaster centers are slated to stay open until they are no longer needed. But the mobile center will move on, Moore said.

The mobile center's hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. today and Saturday.

The three stationary centers are

open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. They are at 212 Locust St., Santa Cruz; 9477 Highway 9, Ben Lomond; and 1937 Main St., Watsonville.

In addition to the local centers, FEMA is taking the exact same disaster applications over the phone through a toll-free number, 1-800-462-9029.

As of Wednesday, the toll-free hotline operators had taken applications from 11,134 quake victims from all over the San Francisco Bay Area, including Santa Cruz County.

The disaster centers around the region had taken applications from more than 17,000 other victims at the centers.