

# Disaster unemployment benefits available

By Ottaway News Service

WASHINGTON — Santa Cruz County workers who lost their jobs because of this winter's storms will be eligible for special disaster unemployment benefits of up to \$166 a week for as long as one year, the Labor Department announced.

Santa Cruz and California's other 16 counties that were declared federal disaster areas by President Reagan on Jan. 21 will be eligible for the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA).

The DUA benefits will be available to those not eligible for benefits under the California state unemployment insurance

program and who, as a direct result of a major disaster, meet the following criteria:

- No longer have jobs, or are unable to begin new jobs;
- Are unable to travel to their jobs;
- Have become the major supporter of their household because of the death of the head of the household;
- Cannot work because of a disaster-incurred injury.

Those eligible will receive benefits as long as they are unemployed, but no longer than one year.

The weekly benefit amount of up to \$166 a week is computed using the same formula as the state's regular unemployment insurance program.

Claims may be filed at the Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster relief center at the County Fairgrounds ) or at the local offices of the California Employment Development Department.

The other 16 counties declared disaster areas by Reagan because of storms, high tides, wave actions and mudslides include: Alameda, Colusa, Contra Costa, Lake, Los Angeles, Marin, Mendocino, Orange, San Benito, San Diego, San Luis

Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Sonoma and Ventura.

"Heavy storms caused widespread damage in these parts of California, and as a result many people lost their jobs or were put out of work temporarily," said Raymond Donovan, secretary of Labor, in making the announcement.

"We in the Labor Department are moving to see that all those eligible receive benefits to which they are entitled under law, so that the economic consequences of the disaster can be alleviated to the greatest extent possible."