

# Highway 17 expected to open by Thanksgiving

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Highway 17 could be reopened to general traffic by the Thanksgiving weekend, it was reported today.

Spokesmen for Caltrans in San Francisco would not return telephone calls about the reopening, first reported in this morning's edition of the San Jose Mercury-News.

But representatives from Assemblyman Sam Farr's office and the Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission confirmed that engineers are now pushing for the Thanksgiving weekend reopening.

Caltrans has also changed the rules for weekend commuters over Highway 17. Commuters will now be allowed in California Highway Patrol-escorted convoys between 5 a.m. and 11 a.m. and

from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. on the weekends, Pat Dellen of the Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission said this morning. The weekday commute hours remain 5 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 7 p.m.

Santa Cruz County roads and bridges sustained nearly \$9 million in damage during the Oct. 17 earthquake and aftershocks.

County supervisors were also told yesterday during a marathon session about the earthquake and its impact on the county that the various sewer systems operated by the county Public Works Department received \$1 million in damage.

Heaviest hit of the sewer lines was the massive East Cliff sewage transmission line that carries upwards of 8 million gallons per day of raw sewage from Mid-county to the Santa Cruz regional sewage treatment facility at

Nearby Lagoon.

County Public Works Director Don Porath, who will be retiring at the end of this year, joked that he had wanted to retire quietly after more than two decades of county service.

"This is my last official disaster," Porath told the supervisors.

Porath said cleanup work on the county's roads is going well.

"If we continue to have the weather we have now," he said, "we will have all the roads patched and driveable by the end of the month."

Several of the county roads remain heavily damaged, Porath said. They include:

Aptos School Road, Browns Valley Road at the bridge between Amesti and Corralitos roads, Buzzard Lagoon Road, Cathedral Drive, Cox Road, Day

Valley Road, Eureka Canyon Road, Glenwood cutoff, Hazel Dell Road, Highland Way, Jarvis Road, Laurel Glen Road, Longridge Road;

Miller Cutoff Road, Miller Road, Morrell Road, Mount Bache Road, Mountain View Road, Old Santa Cruz Highway, Old Summit Road, Redwood Road, Redwood Lodge Road, Rider Road, Rodeo Gulch Road, Schulties Road, Skyland Road, Skyview Terrace (open to residents only), Stetson Road, Upper Zayante Road, Valencia Road, and Vine Hill Road.

Bridges with major damage include Browns Valley Road over Corralitos Creek, Capitola Road Extension, Casserly Road bridge, Cox Road at Bear Creek, East Cliff Drive at Schwan Lake, Rogge Lane bridge over the Pajaro River, Paulsen Road bridge,

Valencia Road at the Cox Road bridge, and the Varni Road bridge.

Porath, in his report to the board, said all county public works crews are working on earthquake-damage repair. Crews from San Mateo and Santa Clara County Public Works departments, the California National Guard, the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Air Force also performed assignments in the county.

National Guard crews have been clearing slides on Browns Valley Road and elsewhere in the county. Marines also cleared debris and took over traffic control duties for a while. The Air Force did aerial reconnaissance of damaged areas in the county.

Local contractors are also working on repairs, particularly to sewage force mains and pump

stations, Porath said.

County engineers are now working with state and federal representatives to complete Damage Survey Reports on every bit of damage to public facilities in the county's unincorporated areas. The DSRs form the basis for state and federal reimbursement of future repair costs.

FEMA policy now requires that all permanent repairs be completed in 18 months. Porath said the county will be asking for consultants to bid on the design for many of the repair projects, but it will probably take longer than the allowed 18 months to complete all of the work.

"We will request time extensions from FEMA as required and anticipate that some of the projects may require up to a 2½-year time period for completion," Porath told the board.