

~~GYPSY MOTH~~
**State Workers
Will Spray
Bt in Felton**

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of

**Officials say moth
must be stopped**

THE state will aerial spray the non-chemical *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) over downtown Felton Saturday in an attempt to eradicate the gypsy moth.

The state had planned to spray Bt in conjunction with carbaryl, a chemical which it believes is more effective, but a Santa Cruz Superior Court judge last week ruled against the use of carbaryl.

Environmentalists and the county cited reports of carbaryl causing kidney and liver disease and said Bt, an effective pesticide against the moth, posed no such threat.

The state said it will spray Bt because immediate action must be taken to kill the gypsy moths. The state has also appealed the Santa Cruz court decision to ban carbaryl and hopes a San Jose court will rule in its favor today or tomorrow. County officials believe that is unlikely.

Visiting Santa Cruz Superior Court Judge Ralph Drummond last week said the state couldn't use carbaryl

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without first proving its safety. Instead, he said the state could use Bt, which environmentalists favor.

The spraying of carbaryl, along with Bt — to which the county did not object — was scheduled to begin March 18.

County Counsel Jonathan Wittwer said that across the United States, Bt is used 10 times as often as carbaryl against the gypsy moth.

The county and city filed suit against the state last month because of reports that carbaryl caused liver and kidney disease. Environmental groups and Felton businesses also joined in the suit.

The state, citing reports that use of carbaryl posed no health hazards, failed to convince Drummond, who after listening to two days of testimony adjourned the hearing one day and returned with his ruling the next.

Drummond decided the state had not proven beyond a reasonable doubt that the use of carbaryl was harmless. "It is patently unreasonable to choose a known dangerous substance over an apparently benign substance (Bt) to combat the gypsy moth in the Felton eradication area," Drummond said.

The judge also said the state had not proved that Bt was less effective than carbaryl to kill the moths when caterpillars of the moths begin to emerge this month. •