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Partly sunny  
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PG&E

## Report: Feds may bill fire victims

The Associated Press

**SAN FRANCISCO** » Federal officials are prepared to bill wildfire victims for a portion of the nearly \$4 billion the government says it's owed by Pacific Gas & Electric Co., if the debt isn't resolved as part of the utility's bankruptcy case, according to a newspaper report Sunday.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has asked for reimbursement from PG&E to

cover costs from the government's response to destructive fires in 2015, 2017 and 2018. Under PG&E's current plan to resolve its bankruptcy, any payment to FEMA would have to come from the \$13.5 billion the utility intends to reserve primarily to settle claims from wildfire victims, the San Francisco Chronicle reported.

Victims' lawyers are fighting FEMA's claim, which would take up nearly 30% of the settlement.

But FEMA told the Chronicle it is compelled to seek compensation from PG&E. Otherwise, individual victims would be responsible if they get settlement funds that duplicate money already paid by the federal government, according to Bob Fenton, the agency's regional administrator.

Fenton said FEMA has "no interest" in reducing the amount of settlement funds available for fire victims.

"What we are interested in doing is holding PG&E responsible and accountable for the billions of dollars taxpayers provided to assist individuals and communities affected by the wildfires," he told the newspaper. "The last thing I want to do is have to go after these individuals that have received claims from the bankruptcy where certain parts of that claim may duplicate funding that we've already given them. ... It's much easier up front to go ahead

and simply deal with PG&E directly."

The FEMA dispute is one of several major unresolved issues in the PG&E bankruptcy. PG&E has already won court approval of its deal with victims' attorneys and a separate \$11 billion settlement to resolve claims from insurance companies. But the company must clear a series of other hurdles as it works to resolve the rest of the case,

**VICTIMS » PAGE 4**

PHOTO OF THE DAY

## OPEN FOR ANGLING



DAN COYRO — SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL

An angler rigs his tackle at the end of the Capitola Wharf on Friday as a family of tourists take in the views on a crisp winter day. The wharf has reopened after suffering structural damage effecting the closure last week.

MIDDLE EAST

## Defying police, Iranians protest

By Joseph Krauss and Jon Gambrell  
The Associated Press

**DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES** » Iranian demonstrators defied a heavy police presence Sunday night to protest their country's days of denials that it shot down a Ukrainian passenger plane carrying 176 people, the latest unrest to roil the capital amid soaring tensions with the United States.

Videos posted online showed protesters shouting anti-government slogans and moving through subway stations and sidewalks, many around Azadi, or Freedom, Square after an earlier call for people to demonstrate there. Other videos suggested similar protests were taking place in other Iranian cities.

Protesters often wore hoods  
**IRAN » PAGE 3**

BORDER PATROL

## Detention conditions go to trial

By Astrid Galvan  
The Associated Press

**PHOENIX** » A years-old lawsuit challenging detention conditions in several of the Border Patrol's Arizona stations will go to trial Monday as the agency as a whole has come under fire following several migrant deaths.

The lawsuit filed in 2015 applies to eight Border Patrol facilities in Arizona where attorneys say migrants are held in unsafe and inhumane conditions. A preliminary injunction granted by U.S. District Court Judge David C. Bury in 2016 already requires the Tucson Sector to provide clean mats and thin blankets to migrants held for longer than 12 hours and to allow them to wash or clean themselves.

But advocates say the Border Patrol still holds immigrants for prolonged periods in filthy and

freezing conditions. Although the lawsuit predates last year's surge in immigrant arrivals at the southern border, it illustrates the some of the challenges posed when migrants are detained, especially if they are children.

Nearly 852,000 people — largely families with kids — were apprehended last fiscal year. This prompted cries of a crisis at the border from government officials looking to stem the numbers and widespread allegations of subpar conditions in Border Patrol facilities that are designed for short-term stays for adults.

In Arizona, migrants and advocates have long complained about the infamously named "hieleras," or iceboxes, where those apprehended by the Border Patrol are held before being turned over to another agency or deported.

Photos from 2015 that were  
**CONDITIONS » PAGE 4**



U.S. BORDER PATROL

A child crawling on the concrete floor near the bathroom area of a holding cell, and a woman and children wrapped in Mylar sheets at a U.S. Customs and Border Protection station in Douglas, Ariz.

SANTA CRUZ

## Affordable housing on city docket in new year

By Jessica A. York  
[jjork@santacruzsentinel.com](mailto:jjork@santacruzsentinel.com)  
[@reporterjess](https://twitter.com/reporterjess) on Twitter

**SANTA CRUZ** » Government leaders will address the city's affordable housing shortage on both the supply and legislative fronts Tuesday.

The Santa Cruz City Council is set to consider clearing the way for San Francisco-based housing developer Reliant Group to apply for as much as \$45 million in tax-exempt bonds and low-income housing tax credit financing to acquire and rehabilitate adjacent Blaine Street apartment complexes, the affordable housing Riverfront Apartments and market-rate Casa Del Rio Apartments. As part of the project, the combined 103 rentals would be deed-

**HOUSING » PAGE 3**

ELECTION 2020

### Aboard Bloomberg bus: Droll wit, swag, ambition

Mike Bloomberg's unconventional presidential campaign rolled across Texas this weekend with a five-stop bus tour. **PAGE A6**



WASHINGTON

### Trump, Pelosi square off ahead of impeachment

President Donald Trump and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi faced off ahead of his impeachment trial in the Senate. **PAGE A6**

AUSTRALIA

### Wildfire battle turns from defense to offense

Crews battling Australia's wildfires say they have been able to attack the fires for the first time in weeks. **PAGE A7**

SOCIAL MEDIA

### Santa Cruz Sentinel videos on YouTube

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