

State briefs: Telemedicine network goes online

The Monterey County Herald

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SACRAMENTO

Telemedicine network
goes online

The country's most ambitious foray yet into the emerging field of telemedicine was launched in a ceremony Tuesday at the UC Davis Medical Center, which will serve as the nerve center for the California Telehealth Network — the largest endeavor of its kind in the United States.

The \$30 million network is intended to harness the power of broadband technology to bridge the distance between medically underserved rural areas — in the United States and possibly abroad — with the expertise of doctors at UC Davis and other urban hospitals.

Using live video, audio and other digital data, the network will eventually connect more than 800 health care facilities in California.

Tuesday's event marked the first 50 of those facilities going online. The full network is expected to be online sometime in 2011.

SAN FRANCISCO

Eco-friendly products site
launched

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Francisco has some recommendations.

The city has launched a website that lists products it considers eco-friendly in categories including cleaning supplies, paints and pest management.

SFApproved.org was originally intended for the city's purchasing department, which was required to use green alternatives under a 2005 city ordinance.

Officials decided to open it up to the public.

LOS

ANGELES

Insurer sued

over fire claims

A lawsuit filed Tuesday accuses Farmers Group Inc. of refusing to

pay claims to policyholders whose homes were damaged by last summer's massive Station Fire near Los Angeles.

The suit, which claims breach of contract and unfair business practices, seeks unspecified damages for more than 1,000 homeowners who reported smoke, ash and other damage from the blaze that killed two firefighters, destroyed 89 homes and scorched 250 square miles of Angeles National Forest.

Brian Kabateck, an attorney for the plaintiffs, said the average loss among homeowners named in the lawsuit was \$25,000 to \$50,000.

Other insurance companies have paid claims for the Station Fire, Kabateck said.

Farmers and other insurers were

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accused of similar unfair practices after the 1994 Northridge earthquake that killed 72 people and caused an estimated \$15.3 billion in damage.

— Herald wire services

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