

CABRILLO COLLEGE WATSONVILLE CENTER

Cabrillo delays opening of green building center

Construction of Watsonville campus addition nearly complete

By **DONNA JONES**

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WATSONVILLE — Crews laid pavers around newly installed landscaping Friday at Cabrillo College's Green Technology Center on Union Street.

Construction of the \$5.5 million center designed to prepare students for industrial jobs started a little more than a year ago and is nearly complete. The first students will walk through its doors in fall 2012.

Initially, the college's construction and energy management pro-

gram was slated to move into the building this spring. But Rock Pfoenhauer, Cabrillo's dean of career education and economic development, said though construction is on track, past experience with last-minute delays on other projects persuaded campus officials to build in a cushion.

"We thought it was safer to plan for a fall opening," he said.

State funding cutbacks also are an issue.

"All operations of the college have been affected," Pfoenhauer said.

The college is short \$200,000 to

\$300,000 to completely outfit the school, and is seeking grants to furnish a computer lab and purchase lab equipment. But Pfoenhauer said the construction program has enough equipment "to get going."

He expects 180 to 190 construction students to take classes at the center each semester. The facility has a capacity of serving 200 to 500 students, depending on how many classes each student takes.

The center was designed to handle additional programs or shifts in



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

Construction of Cabrillo College's green tech center in downtown Watsonville is nearly complete and will open next fall.

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offerings to meet occupational and educational demands.

"We're really paying attention to what looks to happen in job growth," Pfoenhauer said.

The 14,000-square-foot center has been in the works for several years. Local and federal funds are covering the cost.

AT A GLANCE

GREEN TECHNOLOGY CENTER

WHAT: 14,000-square-foot Cabrillo College center focused on industrial careers

WHEN: Opening fall 2012

CAPACITY: 200-500 students per semester

COST: \$5.5 million

BUILDER: Dilbeck and Sons of Salinas