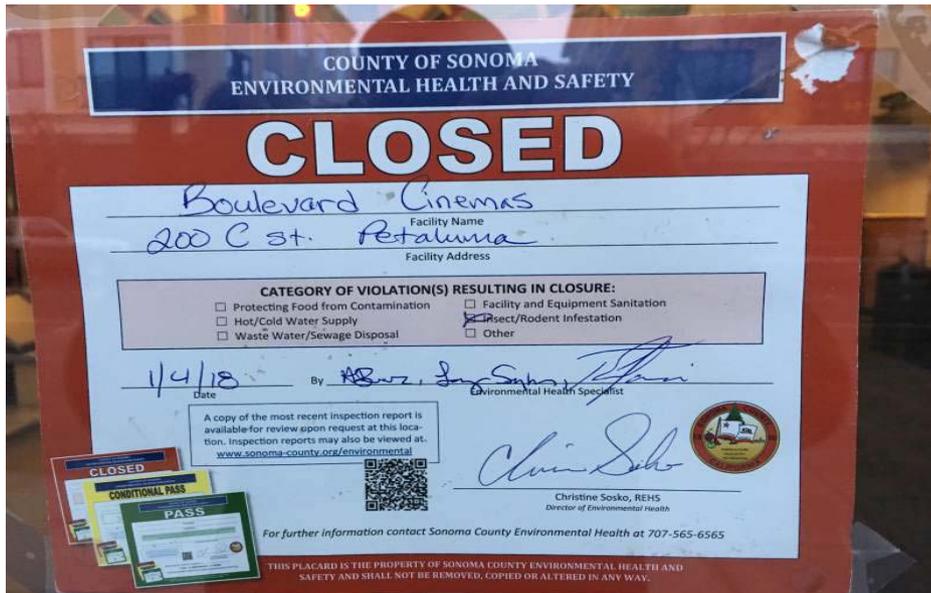


Petaluma's movie theater temporarily closed by health inspectors



DAVID TEMPLETON ARGUS-COURIER STAFF
BY DAVID TEMPLETON ARGUS-COURIER STAFF | January 5, 2018

Boulevard Cinemas, in the heart of Petaluma's Theater district, was closed late Thursday by Sonoma County health inspectors, due to what a posted closure notice lists as an "insect/rat infestation." Early Friday moviegoers are currently being greeted by locked doors and a Sonoma County Health and Safety Department closure notice on the front door.

"We did shut down the theater," said Scott Alonso, communications manager for the Sonoma County Department of Health Services. "We received a complaint from the parent of a child who saw a rodent in one of the theaters. We conducted an unannounced inspection, and found a lot of evidence of rodents."

According to the retail food facility inspection report posted online on the County's Environmental Health page, the inspector observed, "Excessive rodent droppings in theater 8, and droppings in other theaters as well."

Alonso pointed out that no sign of rodent contamination was found in the theater's snackbar area.

"The food areas were safe," he said.

The theater's description as a food service facility gives the County the authority to make inspections, and to close any facility found to be out of compliance.

"Our goal is to protect the public," Alonso said. "That said, we understand that a closure of this kind represents a significant financial burden for the theater, and we hope to allow them to open again as soon as they come into compliance."

That compliance includes eliminating any rodents present, cleaning all areas where feces was discovered, and sealing all entry and exit points to which the rodents have had access. At 8 a.m. on Friday morning, a team of employees and other personnel inside the facility appeared to be at work addressing the situation. Though the movie theater's website currently shows that no films are scheduled for the remainder of Friday, a full lineup of screenings is still listed for Saturday.

"It's possible we could lift the closure by tonight," Alonso said. "We are hopeful that will happen. It depends on what remediation efforts they take. Generally, when we red-tag a facility, that facility can call us at any time for a reinspection. If they've met all the criteria, we allow them to reopen. We have staff on call overnight, and all through the weekend."

Boulevard Cinema is owned by Cinema West, which operates theaters throughout California and Idaho.