Tahoe resident reports in after Hawaii tsunami

Publisher's note: ***The following is from a South Lake Tahoe resident writing from Hawaii to a friend on the South Shore – with permission to pass it along.***

By Pat Oliveira

We're fine. Thanks so much for emailing. Someone please pay a fine for me next week with my "tsunami update".

We were evacuated at 10pm Thursday and allowed to return at noon Friday.It was a very long night since the sirens where blaring all night long. Not a lot of sleep and a very serious and tense situation.

We went to our Tahoe friends' home at the 1,200 foot elevation, so no problem having a place at higher ground. Other people weren't so lucky and many slept in their cars along the roadways.

We arrived home today to no power, though. In this climate, that can be a big food loss very rapidly. But all was well.

Quite a bit of damage on all islands including some very impressive surge/recede at our nearby beach area. Apparently here on the island of Hawaii (the Big Island), we have suffered the most damage.

One beachfront house in an area where we just barbecued a few nights ago was washed away to sea. Several surrounding homes and vehicles sustained a lot of damage, some crunched into each other just like you see on the news, with complete loss or their cars went into the ocean never to be seen again.

The restaurant where we celebrated Carol's birthday just a week ago is next door to a large hotel complex in "downtown"

Kona, which sustained a huge amount of damage. Don’t know about the restaurant though, but the hotel’s first floor, lobby, grounds and pool are a complete loss and a big mess. Many of the shops were flooded.

Mud, debris, water everywhere … anywhere along the shore roadways.

This is now two years in a row we’ve experienced a tsunami evacuation. This time was a zillion times more serious than last year’s experience. During my years living here and our 16 wintering here, never before. Now two years in a row.

We’re fine, just a huge loss here on the Big Island and a lot of destruction with recovery work ahead, including statewide.

Aloha to everyone!