

July 4 South Tahoe fireworks debris washing ashore

By Maria Medina, CBS-13

Residents say they're being forced to clean up the mess more than a week after a fireworks show at Lake Tahoe.

For more than a week, Joan Truxler's filled bag after bag with fireworks debris left over from south Lake Tahoe's Fourth of July show.

The first people to alert her about the trash washing up onshore were her grandsons.

"We were clearing out the area around us, and we were shocked and appalled," she said. "So I continued to walk down the beach and found huge pieces of debris with wires attached to it, and the company's name."

The company that puts on the show, Pyro Spectacular, tells CBS13 they cleaned as much of the debris from the water soon after the show and the next morning, just like they do every year.

Truxler says she's found debris from those South Shore fireworks along a quarter-mile stretch of this beach. But the company says this is the first time they've gotten this complaint after more than 30 years putting on the show.

"We spend about \$3,000 to \$5,000 on cleanup," said Mike Frye with the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority.

The group oversees the fireworks show, and Frye says they also hire the cleanup crew, including divers.

"It's just something that's never happened before."

He says they're working with Pyro and other agencies to figure out what happened this year, especially since the next fireworks show is less than two months away on Labor Day.

"We love the lake and want to take care of it."

He says half of the debris they found was from Pyro, the other half from illegal fireworks.

But Joan says most of what's washed up on shore is from the show.

"I was actually able to find their name on some of the debris," she said. "I would challenge Mike Frye to come look at my debris. None of the agencies here have offered to come and extend a hand."

The Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority wonders if strong winds that day are to blame, or if a net broke free.

They're looking into fishing nets for the Labor Day fireworks show.

Meanwhile, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency is investigating what went wrong.