

# Drought not slowing California development

By Adam Nagourney, New York Times

FOLSOM — Evert W. Palmer has a vision for this city famous for its state prison: 10,200 new homes spread across the rolling hills to the south, bringing in a flood of new jobs, new business and 25,000 more people.

Yes, Palmer, the city manager, is well aware that Folsom Lake, the sole source of water for this Gold Rush outpost near Sacramento, is close to historically low levels, and stands as one of the most disturbing symbols of the four-year drought that has gripped this state. And that Folsom is under orders to reduce its water consumption by 32 percent as part of mandatory statewide urban cutbacks.

But Palmer, like other officials who approved the ambitious plan to expand this city, said he was confident that there was enough water to allow Folsom's population to grow to nearly 100,000 by 2036. It would be economic folly, he said, to run things any other way.

The drought that has overrun California — forcing severe cutbacks in water for farms, homeowners and businesses — has run up against a welcome economic resurgence that is sweeping across much of the state after a particularly brutal downturn. It is forcing communities to balance a robust demand for new housing with concerns that the drought is not cyclical but rather the start of permanent, more arid conditions caused by global warming.

**Read the whole story**

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# **Talk: Faulting and geologic history of the region**

UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center will host Courtney Brailo from the UNR Nevada Seismological Lab on Sept. 17.

The discussion will be about faulting and geologic history of the region, and using newly acquired LiDAR imagery.

A \$5 donation is suggested. Doors open at 5:30pm with a no-host bar, and the program is at 6pm. TERC is on the campus of Sierra Nevada College, 291 Country Club Drive in Incline Village.

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# **Alpine County stores pass tobacco sales test**

Clerks at the Markleeville General Store and Lake Alpine Resort knew to ask a youth decoy for identification and to refuse the sale of tobacco.

Alpine County Tobacco Control Program recently conducted its annual local survey to make sure businesses are complying with laws aimed at protecting youth from tobacco. Under the supervision of an adult chaperone, a specially trained youth decoy attempts to purchase a tobacco product at each retail location.

Businesses are required to train their employees to ask for identification from anyone who appears to be under the age of 27, and to refuse the sale to any person under the age of 18.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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# Climate change could bring twice as many big El Niños

By Sammy Roth, Desert Sun

Scientists have long wondered whether rising global temperatures will lead to an increase in intense El Niño events, like the one that could bring major storms to Southern California this winter. According to a groundbreaking study published Monday, the answer is a resounding, “Yes.”

If human beings don’t slow their emission of planet-warming greenhouse gases, extreme El Niños could nearly double in frequency – from once every 28 years to once every 16 years on average, the new study found. That could spell trouble for California, which experienced mudslides, flooding and \$500 million in damage during an intense El Niño in the late 1990s.

The idea that global warming will lead to stronger El Niños makes perfect sense, said Bill Patzert, a NASA climatologist who was not involved in the study. That’s because El Niños are driven largely by warming water in the tropical Pacific Ocean, which will get especially hot as the world temperatures rise.

An increase in extreme El Niño events will probably be accompanied by an increase in extreme La Niña events, which lead to dry winters in California.

**Read the whole story**

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# Amodei: VA may need 'new culture' to improve

**By Ray Hagar, Reno Gazette-Journal**

Rep. Mark Amodei, R-Carson City, painted a sobering picture of the Veterans Administration on Monday at a veterans town hall meeting in Reno.



Mark Amodei

He said the lumbering and massive federal bureaucracy that takes care of the nation's former military members needs to change issues with its management if it is ever going to improve.

"I continue to believe that real change in the Veterans Administration will not occur until you get a new culture or a new set of personnel at the mid and upper levels of management of the VA," Amodei told a group of veterans at the California Building in Idlewild Park.

**Read the whole story**

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# **Study: Ongoing drought to cost Calif. \$2.74 bil.**

**By Sharon Bernstein, Reuters**

California's ongoing drought will cost the economy in the most populous U.S. state an estimated \$2.74 billion in 2015 and lead to the loss of 10,000 seasonal farm jobs, despite overall health in the state's agricultural sector, researchers said.

Agricultural economists at UC Davis said the drought, entering its fourth year, would impact the state more in 2015 than in 2014, when the total cost to the economy was estimated to be \$2.2 billion.

The report, released on Tuesday, also estimated that with dry conditions and difficulty obtaining water for irrigation.

**Read the whole story**

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## **Food available for those in need**

The Food Bank of El Dorado County will be in South Lake Tahoe on Aug. 26 from 10-11am to host a free farmers market and mobile food pantry distribution.

It will be at the American Legion Hall, 2748 Lake Tahoe Blvd.

One allocation per household is allowed.

Program income guidelines are **online**.

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# **S. Tahoe prefers punishment over prevention when it comes to dealing with animals in trash**

**By Kathryn Reed**

Bear boxes won't be mandatory in South Lake Tahoe any time soon.

Instead, the City Council members on Tuesday chose to continue to react to a problem instead of being proactive. The majority of the council believes mandating bear boxes punishes those who are not creating a problem.

The Waste Management Joint Powers Authority has been working for about a year to come up with regulations that would pertain to all three jurisdictions – the city, El Dorado County and Douglas County.

With the council not wanting bear boxes to be necessary with new residential construction or remodels, this conflicts with what El Dorado County already has on the books. At the last JPA meeting, Supervisor Sue Novasel made no indication the county would want to soften its rules.

"It comes down to the property owner, not the property," Mayor Hal Cole said.

The boxes also count as coverage per the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

The JPA board meets in September with the goal of adopting an ordinance. In order for an item to be approved all three members must be in agreement.

"I'm OK with the bear-proof containers and not the box. I think they work just as well," Councilman Austin Sass said.

John Marchini with South Tahoe Refuse said bears appear to be getting smarter and learning to open the twisty tops.

He also noted it's not just bears that are getting into people's garbage. Coyotes, raccoons and dogs are common, with crows doing a bang-up job in spreading litter.

Although STR has changed its protocols to not pick up trash before 7am, people are still leaving garbage out the night before. It's put in plastic bags and topless cans that can easily become a buffet for wildlife. STR cleans up the mess on trash days. Crews have cameras and can document the situation so the offender is then notified.

Clean Tahoe, the nonprofit that deals with picking up after other people, is also out cleaning up debris.

The council agreed with the JPA's recommendations for punishment – warning the first time, buy a bear-proof container or pay a fine for the second offense, install a bear box on the third offense.

"It gives us a hammer for repeat offenders," City Councilwoman JoAnn Connor said. She represents the city on the JPA.

Sass said this protocol contradicts what the vacation rental ordinance says. There was no further discussion and no comment

by the city attorney.

The council also likes the idea of mandating commercial entities – including multi-family dwellings – lock dumpsters at dusk or at the close of business.

The plan is also to have an educational component so people can better understand why human food and wildlife are not a good combination.

While the JPA had talked about a loan program for people to buy bear boxes, that idea has been tabled for now.

Who will be responsible for the enforcement – most likely STR; and who will send out citations – most likely individual jurisdictions – still need to be solidified.

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#### **In other action:**

- The council agreed at the urging of Planning Commissioner Judy Brown to revisit the historic sign designation criteria so the Trout Farm sign might qualify. The sign is nearly 70-years-old.

- The city will be sending letters next week to all property owners advising them of the vacation home rental ordinance that takes effect Oct. 1. The letter will also include comprehensive information about how to “leave no impact”.

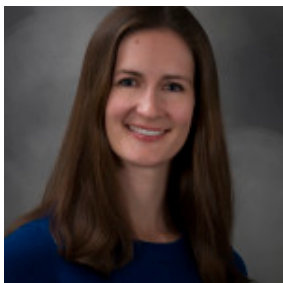
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# Opinion: Making school less stressful

By Tracy Protell

Most kids and parents have a mixture of excitement and nervousness about starting a new school year. This is normal. However, parents can help ease the transition from summer vacation to the school routine. Here are some tips to prepare you and your student for the upcoming academic year.

Bring a little school into summer. Adjust to a school schedule before school starts. A few days before the first day, have your child go to bed early and get up early. For younger kids, “play school” by doing fun structured academic games and activities. For older kids, encourage reading more before school starts.



Tracy Protell

Avoid overscheduling the first few weeks. After school starts, keep some fun outdoor activities going. Spend an afternoon at the pool or beach, or ride bikes around the neighborhood. If you are a busy family, schedule some “outdoor free time.”

Reduce the worry. To handle anxieties about returning to school or a new school situation, parents should calm their own fears or anxieties. Research demonstrates the more anxious parents are, the more anxiety their children show and experience.

Talk about it. Ease your children's fears by talking about their concerns and validating their feelings. Avoid saying "don't worry" or "everything will be fine." Instead, explain how you understand their feelings and that most kids are nervous or worried about the first day. Listen to specific concerns your child has and help make a plan to tackle the worry or perceived problem. For example, if your child says "I won't know anyone in my class," remind your child about making friends last year or identify a neighbor who will be in the same class and arrange a family social gathering. When offered help and encouragement, kids often come up with their own amazing solutions to their problems.

Familiarize with new surroundings. If starting a new school, I encourage families to visit the school and get familiar with the campus. This makes it less intimidating on the first day. If possible, introduce your child to the teacher(s) or the school counselor.

Help your kids with school anxiety. If your child shows school-related anxiety or refuses to attend school, try to keep your child attending daily. Complaints of stomach aches or "I just don't feel good" are often rooted in anxiety and avoidance can increase anxiety. What starts as an occasional request, "I don't feel good; can I stay home today?" can balloon into frequent school avoidance. Instead, rule out serious illness, such as a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, and then ask your child about school fears or concerns. If it is a serious problem, such as bullying, address immediately with a school administrator.

Keep a positive attitude. If you, as a parent, present the start of school as an exciting time and are enthusiastic about learning, your child is likely to feel the same. Even teenagers listen and emulate their parents' attitudes (though they often try to seem like they aren't). School is a very important aspect of your child's development and future success.

I wish you all a safe and healthy school year.

*Tracy Protell is a board-certified pediatrician and child psychiatrist at Barton Health.*

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# More California babies born addicted to drugs

**By Phillip Reese, Sacramento Bee**

A growing number of California infants are born addicted to drugs, according to a Bee review of new state data.

About 1,190 California newborns were diagnosed with drug withdrawal syndrome last year, up more than 50 percent from a decade earlier, according to hospital discharge data from the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development. That translates to about one addicted newborn for every 400 births.

The increase comes as the number of California births has dropped sharply.



**Read the whole story**