

STPUD water, sewer bills expected to rise

By Kathryn Reed

Aging and inadequate infrastructure are the big reasons South Tahoe Public Utility District continues to raise rates.

The massive **sewer line failure** in the Tahoe Keys that is still being fixed is one example. Generators that failed during the January floods is another. Twenty-five miles of water lines are too small to handle a massive fire.

July 1 will likely mark the fourth of five years' worth of rate increases – 6½ percent for water, 6 percent for sewer. This will raise quarterly residential bills by about \$16.35. Today it is \$260, while the average rate in the basin is \$351.

The board had a public hearing regarding the 2017-18 budget on May 4, but only *Lake Tahoe News* showed up. The electeds are expected to vote on the budget on May 18.

The current budget was approved a year ago on a 4-1 vote, with board member Jim Jones voting no because he believes rates should be higher. He is a staunch proponent of being on a more aggressive schedule to fix the infrastructure.

The district has identified \$242 million in water projects and \$137 million in sewer. The 10-year plan addresses \$97.4 million of those combined needs.

To fund the ongoing infrastructure needs the district anticipates future rate hikes. In fiscal year 2018-19 it will likely be a 5 percent water increase and 6 percent sewer.

In fall 2018 South Tahoe PUD plans to engage the public in discussions about another multi-year Proposition 218 notice. The 218 notice is a mechanism by which if enough ratepayers

protest the proposed increases, the district would not be able to go forward with them. Locking in the rates allows for the district to be more strategic with its planning. The annual rates can always be decreased by the board, but not increased once the 218 figures are approved.

The district is adamant the rate increases are strictly for projects – not for salaries. That is all well and good to say, but if employees didn't get raises, then there would be more money for projects and the rate increases could be less.

The district just started negotiations with employees. The current contract expires June 30. The long-term budget – South Tahoe PUD goes 10 years out – includes potential 2 percent annual salary increases.

Compared to 2009, the district's operations and maintenance costs are 12.57 percent lower today. In the same time span, inflation went up 11.5 percent.

"The district can operate another 10 years with the current rates in place if we eliminate the capital improvement projects," Paul Hughes, chief financial officer, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Halting projects isn't going to happen. For one, things break and have to be fixed. Secondly, the state mandates some projects – like water meters. The final 5,000 should be in the ground in the next three years.

Like most public agencies in California, South Tahoe PUD is expecting more money to have to be allocated toward employees' retirement. CalPERS has told government bodies it needs more money to make up for investments that didn't perform as well as they needed to in order to have the cash to pay retirees.

STPUD expects the PERS cost for fiscal year 2017-18 to be \$1,477,325. By fiscal year 2022-23 that number is projected to increase to \$2,512,000. STPUD's share of the risk pool's

unfunded accrued liability is \$7,254,597.

Opinion: Refuel your body and mind

By Lindsay Simon

What fills you up? When you are tired, worn down and need some refueling, what do you do?

These are just a few questions I ask parents and caregivers. For many, the daily demands are overwhelming and it is difficult to find time for self-care and to refuel. However, these are some of the very things your body and mind need to avoid burnout, regain energy, and provide support for your children and family.



Lindsay Simon

Imagine your body is like a car. What happens if you don't refill your gas tank before it reaches empty? Maybe you run out of gas on the way to work and have to call a friend or a tow truck. You are then late for work, have to reschedule meetings, need to find a ride for your kids, and the list goes on. Your day spirals costing time, money, and energy.

Just like your car, refueling your personal gas tank should be

a non-negotiable. You might feel like you don't have the time to get gas, but you have to force yourself to refill the tank. Because if your car's tank reaches empty, the consequences are greater and harder to recover from.

What are some of the consequences that you have experienced for letting your personal gas tank go to empty? Did you lose your temper? Did you say unkind words to a co-worker or a loved one? It is important to know what motivates you to change so that, in the moment, self-care doesn't seem like a waste of time.

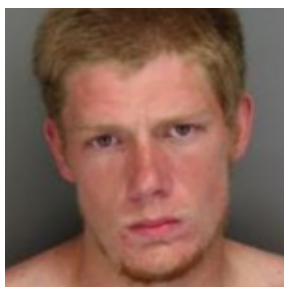
To refuel your body and your mind, take a few moments and write down what helps you relax and what brings you joy. Seriously, stop reading this article and find a pen and paper now. List at least three things. Then, write down when these things can get done and who will support you in accomplishing this goal.

This exercise is one of a variety of different techniques you can use to increase your parental resiliency. Resiliency is defined as the ability to recover from difficult situations and experiences. This is a very important quality for parents and caregivers. Inevitably, families will experience difficult times. How you respond to these difficulties will shape your children's coping skills and how they deal with tough situations.

Parental resiliency is one of five core protective factors I teach in the parent leadership workshop series. This is a fun, interactive class that also covers child development, social and emotional competency, and ways to advocate for your children. The next parent leadership workshop series starts today and all parents and caregivers are welcome to attend.

Lindsay Simon is a licensed marriage and family therapist, clinical director, and owner of A Balanced Life in South Lake Tahoe.

Truckee police seek burglary suspect



Michael John
Lenning

Truckee police officers are looking for a man they believe has committed multiple commercial burglaries as well as vehicle theft.

A felony arrest warrant for Michael John Lenning, 33. He has blond hair, green eyes, is approximately 5-feet-7 and weighs 150 pounds

Lenning has ties to the Placerville and Pollock Pines areas, as well as Sparks and Silver Springs.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Crews work to limit flooding

on Carson River

About 600 feet of temporary barrier has been installed along the Carson River to prevent flooding.

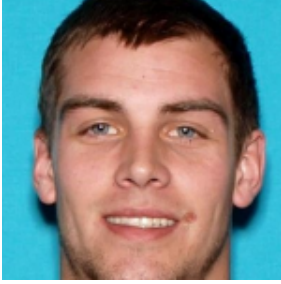
Friday morning flows on the Carson River approached 5,000 cubic feet per second, causing Douglas County and the Carson Valley Conservation District to be concerned. Portions of the natural bank protecting the Aspen Mobile Home Park were eroded away during the previous flood events, increasing the likelihood of flooding during the snowmelt.

F & B Construction installed the "TrapBag" along the East Fork of the Carson River. TrapBags are essentially oversized sandbags which can be rapidly installed in anticipation of flooding. The current installation raises the river bank 4 feet.

This stretch of river overtops its banks when flows reach approximately 6,500 cubic feet per second.

The county contributed \$25,000 with the Aspen Mobile Home Association contributing \$5,000.

Alleged Pop Warner thief turns himself in



Christopher
Klug

Christopher Klug, who is accused of embezzling from a South Shore sports organization, turned himself in to South Lake Tahoe police officers on May 5.

Klug, 25, was booked into the El Dorado County Jail on one count of felony embezzlement. Bail was set at \$25,000.

Earlier this year Klug became president of the nonprofit South Tahoe Pop Warner and Cheer Association. Officers said since that time a substantial amount of money has gone missing.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Golf event to benefit Barton Foundation

The 23rd annual Barton Foundation Golf Tournament is June 23 at Lake Tahoe Golf Course in Meyers.

All proceeds will support the Barton Foundation's efforts to improve the health and well-being of South Shore residents.

It will be a scramble format with teams of four. Golf registration includes continental breakfast, golf and golf cart, drink tickets, and a buffet lunch. Prizes will be

awarded for best costume, team spirit, and the tournament winners.

Sign up for the early bird price of \$165 per a player or \$660 for a foursome. After May 10, the registration fee for individuals will go up to \$185. Tickets for the golf tournament can be purchased **online**.

Hospitality industry faces shortage of passionate workers

By Todd Prince, Las Vegas Review-Journal

The hospitality industry is facing a shortage of passionate workers and the need to upgrade appearances more frequently, according to a panel of hotel chain executives at an industry conference in Las Vegas.

“Talent is something that does keep me awake at night,” Bill Walshe, chief executive officer of Viceroy Hotel Group, told attendees at the Hospitality and Design Expo in the Mandalay Bay Convention Center on Wednesday.

“I think it is going to be increasingly hard for us to find people who want to work in our industry because they have a passion for hospitality,” he said.

Read the whole story

Squaw Valley building relationships with Chinese

Squaw Valley on May 20 will host members of the U.S. and Chinese national freestyle teams, as well as delegates from the resort's sister mountain in China, Genting Resort Secret Garden, for a trail naming ceremony of Squaw Valley's competition mogul course under the Red Dog chairlift.

U.S. and Chinese national freestyle team members will be on site for nearly a week hosting a joint training session on the course.

Resort managers at Genting Resort Secret Garden renamed a trail Squaw Valley in January. Secret Garden will be a host venue for the 2022 Winter Olympic freestyle skiing and snowboarding events. A Squaw Valley delegation led by CEO Andy Wirth and chief mountain host and Olympic gold medalist Jonny Moseley were on-hand for the renaming.

Squaw Valley will in turn name the mogul course under Red Dog chair Secret Garden.

High melanoma rates in Northern Nevada

By Angela Schilling, KTVN-TV

Sunscreen is a must this time of year, especially if you plan on heading up to Tahoe.

“Taking care of your skin is so important especially because we’re at a higher altitude,” said Kristen Power of the Nevada Cancer Coalition.

The closer you are to the sun, the more radiation you’re exposed to, raising your risk for cancer. The valley is about 4,500 feet, while the beaches at Lake Tahoe are over 6,000 feet.

Read the whole story

Super snowpack could be deadly summer hazard

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Summer is when Sierra Nevada hikers and bikers transform dreams of warm days and magical mountain vistas into reality.

This year an extra helping of snow survival skills might keep those dreamy, high country trips from turning into nightmares.

That’s because the many thousands of vacationers who surge onto Sierra Nevada trails in the coming months will need to cope with the biggest snowpack in decades.

Creeks they remember as a mere hop, skip and jump to cross could require serious strategy to survive.

Read the whole story