Tips to prevent a house fire

By Teri Mizuhara

Across the nation more than 236,000 house fires occur annually and they peak in January due to the winter weather.

Many of these fires are preventable.

Here are some key things you can do to reduce your chance of becoming a statistic:

- The No. 1 cause of house fires (33 percent) are cooking fires, so to prevent this type of fire simply never leave food unattended. If you must leave your kitchen, either turn off the appliance that is cooking the food or take a timer or cooking implement with you to remind you of the cooking food.How you heat your home can put you at risk of a house fire.
- Fireplaces, chimneys and fireplace related heating equipment should be professionally maintained annually. Among other things, a professional should check that your stove pipes/chimneys and surrounding area are not deteriorating and becoming compromised to the point they can cause a fire.
- Do not overload your electrical outlets. Consider having a licensed electrician check and possibly upgrade your home's wiring since many house fires are traced back to electrical malfunctions, such as short circuits or arcing. According to a U.S. Fire Administration Topical Fire Report, older homes (35 years-plus) are at an increased risk of catching fire and "there are three major areas in older properties that contribute to compromised electrical systems: the effects of aging on the wiring itself, misuse and abuse of the electrical components, and non-code-compliant installations."
- Make sure you have smoke detectors and carbon monoxide

detectors properly installed and maintained in your home. Literally every second counts in a house fire, so make sure you have your “early warning” system in place and functioning in the event you have a fire. Always exit the building immediately and call 911 from outside the building. Never go back inside the house.

With the holidays behind us and 2014 ahead of us, this is a good time to focus on our personal safety. Preventing a fire might be hard to measure, but the results are priceless.

Teri Mizuhara works for the Amador-El Dorado Unit of CalFire.

Raw sewage spills into Tahoe at Keys Marina



Sewage from the Fresh Ketch restaurant spills onto a walkway before winding up in Lake Tahoe. Photo/Andrew Lubrano

By Kathryn Reed

Sewage from an overflow tank at the Fresh Ketch restaurant flowed into Lake Tahoe for at least 24 hours this weekend.

People at the restaurant first saw the spill Friday night, but Summit Plumbing of South Lake Tahoe said they didn't receive a call for service until 6:08pm May 3.

Employees with the El Dorado County Environmental Health Department went to the restaurant Saturday afternoon. Dry bleach was used on the surface areas where people frequent.

"There is not much you can do once it is in the water because algae starts taking up the nutrients. Bacteria has only a certain amount of time it can stay viable," Lauri Kemper with Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The cold temperature of the lake and sunlight would dissipate the bacteria quickly.

However, her agency will be out at the Tahoe Keys Marina on Monday to take samples for bacteria.

It is near impossible to know how much sewage made its way into Lake Tahoe, but several gallons, according to witnesses.

No one from the marina or restaurant was available for comment.

The expanded outdoor seating area behind the restaurant has tables and chairs that sit over the overflow tank for the restaurant. This is where the problem was.

"We walked up and there was a very large puddle and interesting odor. When we got up to it we saw toilet paper,

etcetera coming from the old pump-out station," Andrew Lubrano told *Lake Tahoe News*.

This was on May 2. He went back out the next morning and saw the problem had not been fixed. He called the 800 number for Lahontan to report the spill.

Kemper said her agency would work with the county to see what it has found, as well as with South Tahoe Public Utility District.

"With all the facilities connected, they may need a larger tank or to maintain the lines better. They could be dumping grease. STPUD has ordinances against dumping grease into their lines," Kemper said.

This will be the second investigation Lahontan will have involving the Tahoe Keys Marina. The other is the fueling dock. Kemper said she was not at liberty to discuss that case further at this time.

Lights go out on traditional light bulbs

By Josh Levs, CNN

It lit up the world and showed us all our way. It served presidents, princes, and paupers with equal alacrity. It brought the writings of Yeats, Joyce, Rowling, and Trudeau to millions of bed-readers, and helped countless people around

the world avoid stubbing their toes in the dark.

And now, it is no more.

Farewell, traditional light bulb. As the clock struck midnight New Year’s Day, the light dimmed on your reign as the mechanical illuminator of human existence.

Rest in peace.

This was no sudden death. The diagnosis came in years ago, in 2007, when President George W. Bush signed a law to replace standard incandescents with more efficient bulbs.

Read the whole story

Winter softball tourney looking for teams

The 32nd annual March of Dimes Snoball Softball Tournament is Jan. 25-26 in South Lake Tahoe.

Players from more than 100 teams brave the elements and put their skills to the true test.

This is a double elimination tournament with two divisions, men’s and co-ed.

Proceeds fund research to develop new treatments for birth defects and infant health problems. In addition, it provides support for perinatal education and programs to educate families about lifestyle choices resulting in healthier babies.

For more info, call (775) 200.1949 or email

dhyatt@marchofdimes.com.

USFS to pile burn on Luther Pass

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews will resume prescribed fire operations at Luther Pass on Jan. 6. Operations will continue as conditions allow.

All prescribed fire projects are conducted in accordance with an approved prescribed fire burn plan. Burn plans describe specific conditions under which operations are conducted including the weather, number of personnel, and opportunities to minimize smoke impacts.

Smoke from prescribed fire may continue for several days after the initial ignition. Smoke that settles in low lying areas in the morning usually lifts out of the area during normal daytime heating. All prescribed fires are monitored regularly for burning and smoke dispersal and action is taken to mitigate concerns as they arise. The Forest Service makes every effort to conduct prescribed fire operations during weather patterns that carry smoke away from communities.

Forest Service staff will post road signs around the areas affected by the prescribed fire, send email notifications, and update the local fire information line at (530) 543.2600, No. 6.

Ski helmet use not reducing brain injuries

By Kelley McMillan, New York Times

The fact that Michael Schumacher was wearing a helmet when he sustained a life-threatening head injury while skiing in France on Sunday probably did not come as a surprise to experts who have charted the increasing presence of helmets on slopes and halfpipes in recent years. The fact that the helmet did not prevent Schumacher's injury probably did not surprise them, either.



Those taking lessons at Heavenly must wear a helmet. Photo/LTN file

Schumacher, the most successful Formula One driver in history, sustained a traumatic brain injury when he fell and hit his head on a rock while navigating an off-piste, or ungroomed, area at a resort in Méribel, France. Although he was wearing a helmet, he sustained injuries that have left him fighting for his life in a hospital in Grenoble, France.

Schumacher’s injury also focused attention on an unsettling trend. Although skiers and snowboarders in the United States are wearing helmets more than ever – 70 percent of all participants, nearly triple the number from 2003 – there has been no reduction in the number of snow-sports-related fatalities or brain injuries in the country, according to the National Ski Areas Association.

Read the whole story

Letter: Hope Lutheran helps at Bread & Broth

To the community,

Feeding the hungry of the South Shore is the goal of the Bread & Broth program and Hope Lutheran Church of the Sierra has been supporting B&B’s program since its inception.

Hope Lutheran Church has been donating $250 twice a year to sponsor two Adopt A Days annually and members of the church are regular Bread & Broth volunteers who donate their time to cook, serve and cleanup for the Monday evening dinners.

Bread & Broth would like to thank Hope Lutheran Church of the Sierra for their continued support by sponsoring the Dec. 30 evening dinner. Helping their fellow church members serve the dinner were Linda Amundson, Mort Meiers, Diane Martin, Julia Martinez and Cathy Haynes. “If you haven’t helped serve food at B&B, I highly recommend the experience. You get to be around fun and grateful people. Give it a try in 2014!” said Linda Amundson.

The evening’s dinner was attended by approximately 80 Lake Tahoe community members. Their gratitude and enjoyment for their tasty and filling meal was very evident in their overwhelming response to the “call for seconds” and “to go servings”. These meals would not be available to those in need without the generosity of donors like Hope Lutheran Church.

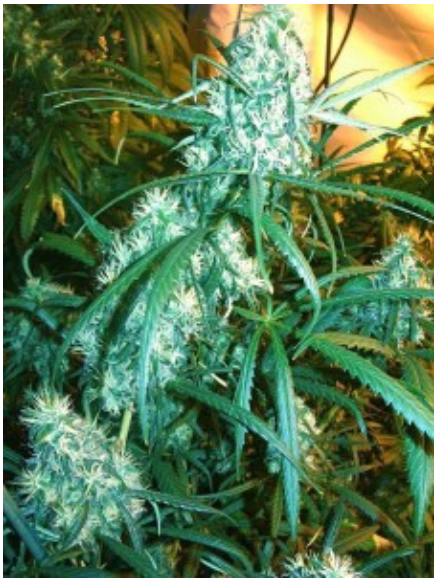
For more information about B&B, go online or find us on Facebook.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Kubby’s pending medical marijuana patent sold

Steve Kubby of South Lake Tahoe is selling his medical marijuana patent that is pending for $1 million and has been hired to be CEO of Cannabis Sativa Inc.

Cannabis Sativa (CBDS) has signed an agreement to purchase the patent pending for what is being called af super potent medicinal cannabis strain. The agreement gives CBDS an option to purchase KUSH Inc., the owner of the patent pending, for an additional $1 million. Kubby owns KUSH.



CTA is considered a superior strain of cannabis.
Photo/Provided

The strain, called CTA, has been under review by the U.S. Patent Office since April 30, 2010.

“We are very pleased to announce our acquisition of what we believe will be the world’s first patented cannabis plant,” Cannabis Sativa President David Tobias said in a press release. “(Kubby) played a key role in raising the money to put Prop. 215, California’s historic 1996 medical marijuana voter initiative, on the ballot. He is a pioneer and respected leader in the cannabis community and brings a wealth of experience and contacts to CBDS.”

The KUSH management team, which includes cannabis expert Ed Rosenthal, former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson and former Sen. Mike Gravel, D-Alaska, is expected to join CBDS.

“The economic opportunities from the emerging cannabis economy are staggering. For example, in the first three days of 2014, my cannabis stocks nearly tripled in value. My friends and I are all prospering beyond our wildest dreams, because of legal cannabis businesses and so can you,” Kubby told *Lake Tahoe News*.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Zephyr Cove Tennis Club Friends is hosting a Five at Five Social on Jan. 18. For $5 starting at 5pm people may eat all the chili they can at Coyote Grill in Zephyr Cove.

• The first public electric vehicle charging station in the Carson Valley has been installed on Eddy Street next to the Historian Inn in Gardnerville.

• For the third year in a row, Sugar Bowl Resort has received the Best of Weddings award by the Knot, the nation’s most visited wedding planning website.

• January is National Learn to Ride and Snowboard Month. Many Lake Tahoe resorts are offering special deals.

• Tahoe Youth & Family Services is not accepting clothing donations at this time because of limited need and storage space.

California Legislature looking for fellows

Applications for the 2014-15 California Senate Fellows Program and Assembly Fellowship Program are available for interested college graduates.

The programs provide college graduates an opportunity to become full-time Senate or Assembly staff members at the Capitol for 11 months beginning next fall.

Fellows are assigned to the personal or committee staff of a Senator or Assembly member, and also participate in academic seminars with legislators, senior staff, journalists, lobbyists, and state government officials.

Fellows are paid a monthly stipend plus health, vision, and dental benefits. They enroll as graduate students at Sacramento State University. The enrollment fees are paid by the programs.

Anyone who will be at least 20 years of age and a graduate of a four-year college or university by Sept. 1, 2014, is eligible to apply. There is no preferred major. Individuals with advanced degrees and those in mid-career are also encouraged to apply.

For detailed information about the fellowships and applications, go online. The application deadline is Feb. 10.