

Strapped Folsom to charge for emergency medical services

By CBS News

The fire department in Folsom will start charging \$225 for emergency medical services, reflecting a trend of financially strapped cities taking unusual steps to close burgeoning budget gaps.

The Sacramento County city begins implementing the new policy Monday, according to CBS Sacramento.

“The real issue is how do we provide the essential services the community is seeking from us?” Folsom Fire Chief Ron Phillips said.

Currently Folsom residents are treated by paramedics for free because it is covered by the Fire Department. The fee is an additional cost on top of taxes residents already pay and applies whether or not the patient is actually transported to the hospital.

The new revenue – expected to bring in \$250,000 in the next fiscal year – will go toward gas, supplies and paramedic personnel, according to the report.

[Read the whole story](#)

Bicyclist dies in Truckee

road crash

Truckee Police Department report that a 47-year-old male on a group bicycle ride crashed on Old Highway 40 near South Shore Drive on July 13 at about 9:35am and later was pronounced dead at an area hospital.

The bicyclist was wearing a helmet but suffered massive head injuries. His identity is being withheld pending appropriate notifications.

The police said it appears the crash only involved the bicyclist and no other motorists, but anyone who may have witnessed this incident is asked to contact Sgt. Robert Womack at (530) 550.2323.

Robbers Fire burns more than 1,400 acres in Placer County

By KCRA-TV

A fire burning in a steep canyon between the towns of Colfax and Foresthill in Placer County grew overnight, but firefighters were also able to get some additional containment.

Cal Fire officials said Saturday morning that the Robbers Fire has burned 1,427 acres since igniting Wednesday afternoon, and was 20 percent contained.

More than 1,900 firefighters are currently fighting the fire, which is burning in a steep, heavily wooded area.

Gov. Jerry Brown on Friday called in more firefighters and the California National Guard to help battle a Placer County wildfire that has forced the evacuation of 300 people.

[Read the whole story](#)

DirecTV users lose Comedy Central, MTV in fee dispute

By Mark Glover, Sacramento Bee

Sacramento-area DirecTV customers missing programs this week on Nickelodeon, MTV, Comedy Central and more than a dozen other Viacom cable channels can at least take solace in the fact that they're not alone.

Nationwide, 20 million viewers are in the same boat.

Channels owned by Viacom went black on Wednesday, the byproduct of yet another dispute with DirecTV over so-called carriage fees – money paid for the right to retransmit content.

Both sides are blaming each other amid failed talks for a new carriage contract. The existing contract recently expired.

Denise Denson, Viacom's executive vice president of content distribution and marketing, said "the last proposal DirecTV had made was lower than anyone else pays in the industry, and a deal we said we would not do out of fairness to other distributors.

“DirecTV also refused to engage with us on any issues related to the deal beyond the rate increase. We are ready to talk at any time.”

[Read the whole story](#)

Poll: Californians remain gloomy on economy

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

The recession ended three years ago and unemployment is falling – but try telling that to most Californians.

Despite evidence of a recovery, a resounding 88 percent of California voters believe the state’s economy is enduring “bad times,” according to the latest Field Poll.

What’s more, they generally don’t expect a big improvement in the next 12 months. Just 31 percent foresee the economy improving, and 24 percent believe it will get worse. The rest expect the economy to simply tread water.

The results show that most Californians don’t buy into “the official numbers about how the economy is performing,” said poll director Mark DiCamillo. “Not much optimism there.”

In the three years since the recovery officially started, the number of Californians who believe the state is in bad times has fallen from 96 percent to 88 percent. Pollsters, economists and citizens alike believe the gloomy sentiment is emblematic of the weak pace of economic recovery.

[Read the whole story](#)

Zoos struggle to breed endangered species in captivity

By Leslie Kaufman, New York Times

FRONT ROYAL, Va. – After cautiously sniffing the grass, three male cheetahs at the animal-breeding center here suddenly began running in frenzied circles. It was a sign that a female cheetah that normally lives in the yard was in heat.

Then one of the males let out a low, seal-like bark – a signal for an even higher state of arousal. The other males were excused.

To maximize the chances for successful breeding, scientists have learned to separate cheetahs by gender, even preventing them from seeing each other before they mate. It turns out that familiarity can be a turnoff for cheetahs, too.

Finally, it was time to bring in the female. She seemed mystified by the male cheetah's eagerness and failed to assume a mating position. The encounter fizzled.

With extinctions rising and habitats being destroyed, zoos are trying to breed about 160 endangered species in captivity. But while mating in the wild seems largely primal and effortless, in captivity it can be anything but.

[Read the whole story](#)

Tahoe home sales jump, prices stagnant

By Sanford Nax, Sacramento Business Journal

Lower prices are helping boost home sales around Lake Tahoe, according to a midyear report released by Lake Tahoe-based real estate company Chase International .

Sales increased 28 percent, but there was no change in dollar volume. That's because median and average prices fell 19 percent and 33 percent respectively to \$310,000 and \$628,944 in the first six months of 2012 compared with the same period in 2011. Sales of homes under \$1 million jumped 31 percent.

"Decreasing inventory coupled with historic low prices is enticing buyers back to the market," said Susan Lowe, corporate vice president for Chase International in a statement. "I'm sure we'll continue to see a lot of movement throughout the rest of the year."

[Read the whole story](#)

NTPUD fined \$239,081.25 by Lahontan board

The North Tahoe Public Utility District received a slightly higher than expected fine from the Lahontan Water Quality Control Board for a 2010 sewage spill.

The board voted July 12 to fine NTPUD \$239,081.25, about \$7,000 more than the team investigating the spill proposed.

The board decided to increase the fine because it felt there was more harm done to Lake Tahoe clarity, Doug Smith, supervising engineering geologist, told *Lake Tahoe News*. The fines are calculated using various criteria designed to standardize penalties, said Smith, and the board decided to bump up the amount on a few factors.

The sewage spill occurred Dec. 19, 2010, during a heavy snowstorm. The power went out on the main line and then the generator ran out of gas. No alarms were installed to let officials know the generator was not functioning properly.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Aerial spraying of mosquitoes criticized as threat to area waters

By Cynthia H. Craft, Sacramento Bee

If it seems like aerial bombardments of mosquitoes are coming fast and furious this summer, rest assured it's not a product of the imagination.

Mosquito control district aircraft are taking to the skies earlier and more frequently this season than in any other year since the West Nile virus was detected in the Sacramento region in 1999.

The stepped-up aerial pesticide sprayings are an unintended

consequence of a federal court ruling that forces ground pesticide use by mosquito control districts to fall under the permit requirements of the federal Clean Water Act.

Specifically, mosquito district officials say, meeting the Clean Water Act requirements for groundwater treatments means more paperwork and administrative duties for ground technicians treating larval pools. The new rules have caused technicians to reach an average of 50 fewer larval pools monthly than they would have before the regulations went into effect this year, according to district officials.

Since aerial spraying of adulticides doesn't face the same restrictions as ground treatments near water, the district has opted to go after adult mosquitoes with sprayings by air or truck-mounted sprayers.

[Read the whole story](#)

Hot afternoon winds threaten to provoke Robbers Fire

By Bill Lindelof, Sacramento Bee

The fire that has scorched more than 1,000 acres of wildland and threatened homes near Foresthill is still burning this morning but its march has at least temporarily slowed.

However, fire officials are worried that the afternoon will bring hot winds that could push the fire toward houses despite the best efforts of more than 1,800 firefighters.

Dubbed the Robbers fire, it began about 3:20 p.m. Wednesday near the east bank of the north fork of the American River and

burned eastward, toward Iowa Hill. Since then, aerial and ground efforts to quell the blaze have been on-going.

Overnight, the fire was relatively quiet. That was in contrast to Thursday when the fire made several different runs in various directions, the most aggressive being in the southeast direction toward the Yankee Jims area.

When the fire bolted toward the Yankee Jims area about 3:30 p.m. the Placer County Sheriff's office ordered additional evacuations. About 30 people were told to leave for their safety, bringing total evacuations since Wednesday to about 150.

The fire as of today is estimated to have consumed 1,100 acres of forest, an increase of 300 acres since Thursday. The blaze is 10 percent contained.

Read the whole story