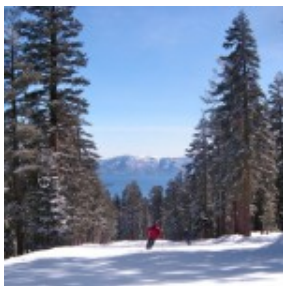


Weather advisory issued for Lake Tahoe

The National Weather Service has issued a winter weather advisory from 4pm Tuesday to 10am Wednesday.

A mix of rain and snow is expected to develop Tuesday afternoon across western Lassen County before changing to all snow and spreading to the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Between 4 to 8 inches of snow are expected in the basin by Wednesday morning, with 8 to 12 inches above 7,00 feet.



Blue skies
filled
Northstar on
Monday, but
that is not
likely to be
the case the
rest of the
week.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

The Weather Service is expecting slick roads, with chain controls up by Tuesday afternoon.

5 snowboarders rescued from Heavenly

It took search and rescue crews two hours to find five snowboarders from Denver who were lost after skiing out-of-bounds at Heavenly Mountain Resort.

One of the riders called authorities from his cell phone at 5:15pm Saturday to say the group was lost.

With nightfall and harsh winter weather conditions, the call was ranked an extreme high-priority for Douglas County SAR. More than 20 SAR members helped in the search. They used GPS triangulation of the caller's cell-phone signal to identify the general area where the subjects were lost.

Two snowshoe teams, four snowmobile search teams, and a snowcat tracked rescue vehicle aided in the search. It was a snowshoe teams that located the lost snowboarders. The rescue team guided the lost snowboarders across a stream and up a steep hill, to a nearby road where the snowcat transported them to safety.

The snowboarders, ranging in age from 23-27, were identified as: Jonathan Edmonds, Justin Hubler, Byron Paschell, Aaron Williams and Kerry Crunkleton.

The Douglas County Search and Rescue Team does not charge recipients for the cost of rescue efforts. DCSAR is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization. Members are on call 24/7 year-round, and frequently perform their tasks in harsh weather during late night and early morning hours. The unit depends on generosity from the public for funding and equipment. Financial donations may be mailed to DCSAR at: PO

STPUD contemplating term limits for board members

By Kathryn Reed



South Tahoe Public Utility District board members are expected to vote March 4 whether they want to take the issue of term limits to the voters.

Three of the five must agree to place it on the ballot for it to be there. Because the district does not have any members up for election until 2012, it would incur about a \$17,000 bill to have the question on the November ballot.

It would then be up to the voters if they want the STPUD board members to be termed out.

Board President Dale Rise is proposing three four-year terms be the maximum any person could serve. It would not affect current board members unless they are re-elected – that's when the start of the 12 years would be begin based on state law.

This means with the next election being in 2012 for STPUD that those people could serve until 2024.

At this juncture, it does not look like the board is interested in having an at-large election for the five seats.

The board has the power to change this without voter approval.

Also at the 2pm March 4 meeting the board is expected to further discuss the city's proposed redevelopment area. City officials gave a 2.5-hour presentation to the board at its Feb. 18 meeting.

Unsettled weather expected for last week of February

By Kathryn Reed

While the South Shore of Lake Tahoe didn't record more than a few inches of snow in the last 24 hours, Reno broke snowfall records.

The Reno area saw 4.2 inches of snowfall with a liquid equivalent of 0.42 inches. The old record for Feb. 20 for snowfall dated to 1918 when 2.9 inches fell. The precip record was 0.17 inches set in 1979.



A kayaker paddles up the Upper Truckee River on Feb. 21.

Photo/Kathryn

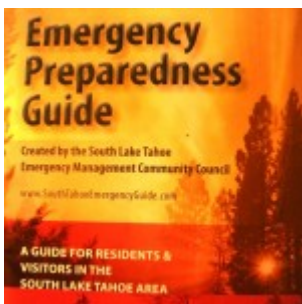
Reed

Snow showers are expected on and off throughout Sunday and Monday in the greater Lake Tahoe area. Unsettled weather is being called for most of the week, according to the National Weather Service.

Roads in and around the area are slick and are likely to ice up again when the temperatures drop below freezing. Chain controls have been in affect on some roads leading in and out of the Lake Tahoe Basin

Ski resorts on both ends of the lake were boasting of about 4 inches of new snow this morning,

Emergency guide designed specifically for Tahoe residents



By Kathryn Reed

What would you take in an emergency? Who would you call? Where would you meet? What happens if all your contacts are on your computer and it's not with you or your cell phone doesn't work or the battery dies?

Those are just some of the questions the "Emergency

Preparedness Guide” makes people think about.

The South Lake Tahoe Emergency Management Community Council created the free 32-page document. The council is a mix of emergency responders from El Dorado, Douglas and Alpine counties.

“We talked about it before the (2007) Angora Fire. The fire gave us the drive to get it done,” Darcie Carpenter, chairwoman of the council who is also the director of Emergency Management and Infection Control for Barton HealthCare System, said of the guide. “We wrote it so the material would not be outdated tomorrow.”

She does hope it could be updated every five years to make sure things are current. Former El Dorado County Sheriff Jeff Neves’ introductory page outdates it because he is no longer in office.

A slew of people were involved in the project. Experts in a particular field were responsible for suggesting what to do in an emergency. For example, it was school officials helping to write about what happens in an emergency if school is in session. It was South Tahoe Public Utility District talking about the precautions to take before tragedy strikes in regards to water issues.

It’s not a generic guide, but it’s not too detailed either to be something people wouldn’t read or do when it comes to the checklists.

“The risks here are specific to Tahoe,” Carpenter said.

Wildland fires, floods, air quality and extreme cold weather are some the issues in the guide

A list of documents that should be able to be retrieved quickly is listed. They range from passports to wills to immunization records.

The guide lists what should be assembled for a disaster preparedness kit. In part this includes water, an extra pair of glasses, phone numbers, sanitary supplies and cash.

Something that is often not talked about when it comes to emergencies is what to do if you are work. One entry says, "Do not rely on electronic lists, direct-dial phone numbers or computer organizers that may not work in an emergency." Thus the need to print some of that information before disaster strikes.

The council printed 14,000 copies of the guide. The Red Cross, one of the partners in the project, has distributed guides out at schools. The council will be handing them out at various community events and they are available for free at South Shore fire stations.

State grants helped pay for the printing as well as a slew of sponsors who are listed in the guide.

Kirkwood working out its electrical issues

By Kathryn Reed

Ratepayers are not expected to see a spike in bills as Kirkwood continues to get its power from temporary rented generators.

Although Mountain Utilities, an arm of Mountain Springs Kirkwood, is suddenly paying for power in a different way because a New Year's Day fire destroyed the powerhouse, what's in place now is more efficient so the cost balances out.



Kirkwo
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Photo/
Kathry
n Reed

Insurance issues are still being worked out regarding the fire that knocked out power to the ski resort and all lodging facilities for a couple days.

“There is a high degree of confidence that a new plant can be operational by fall,” said David Likins, CEO for Mountain Springs Kirkwood. MSK also owns Kirkwood Mountain Resort.

Long before the fire, Mountain Utilities had been talking to Kirkwood Meadows Public Utility District about taking over the power operation.

“The terms of the final acquisition have not been resolved. It’s difficult to put a dollar value on it until that transaction is negotiated in final form,” Likins said.

The plan is Mountain Utilities would then dissolve. The 10 employees are likely to work elsewhere for Mountain Springs Kirkwood.

The ski resort will still have to maintain transformers for the chairlifts just like homeowners are responsible for the interior wiring of their homes no matter the electrical supplier.

Before the fire, the diesel powerhouse was not going to be part of the sale.

Likins said the plan now is to have KMPUD work with Mountain Utilities on creating the new powerhouse, with the idea KMPUD will eventually own and operate it. Eventually, it will be the

backup in case power lines go down.

The generators now in place will remain there until the powerhouse is erected. Likins anticipates the permitting process to go smoothly because the land is being used for the same thing.

In March, the draft environment impact report and statement should be released by the U.S. Forest Service and Kirkwood Meadows Public Utility District for the potential authorization of a 50-year special use permit for the construction, use and maintenance of a KMPUD power line connecting the electrical grid near Salt Springs with Kirkwood Meadows.

The line would connect with an existing Pacific Gas & Electric line. The new line would likely be on Eldorado National Forest land.

The final EIR/EIS could be released in October.

KMPUD now provides water and sewer services to the area as well as power to its plant, office building and employee housing off Loop Road in the Kirkwood valley.

Little-known vehicle law costing drivers money, points

By Kathryn Reed

Drivers failing to slow down or move into an unoccupied lane when emergency vehicles are on the shoulder with lights on could face a hefty fine and several points on their record.

“Move-Over” is the law in 48 states, including California and Nevada.



Not slowing down when an officer has his lights on could be costly.

The problem is not many people know about it.

It's been on the books in California for several years, but was set to expire Dec. 31, 2009. Lawmakers renewed the bill and included Caltrans workers in the language. Nevada has had the law for about six years.

Although every state has different nuances to the regulations, the gist is drivers must go into the left lane when there is one and it's safe, or slow down while passing emergency vehicles with lights on.

In Nevada, it's the law on all roads. In California, it's just on freeways. In the greater Lake Tahoe area that would be west of Fresh Pond to Placerville on Highway 50 and then outside of Placerville headed west. All of Interstate 80 would be subject to this law.

It's not just all law enforcement vehicles with lights on – fire trucks, ambulances, and the amber lights of tow trucks and highway workers count, too.

“Primarily the reason why it was adopted in our state and other states is because officers were struck and killed doing their job,” Nevada Highway Patrol Trooper Chuck Allen said. “You have to reduce your speed to less than what is posted. There is nothing more irritating than walking back to the patrol car and a vehicle zooms by and there is a free travel lane.”

Fines vary in different jurisdictions, but law enforcement contacted by *Lake Tahoe News* said to expect to pay several hundred dollars and have multiple points on your driving record if caught not slowing down or moving over.

Officers recognize that it can be difficult to catch people in the act because they are working a stop and because the slowing down part is subjective.

Lt. Tim Malone with the California Highway Patrol said it’s easy enough for officers to radio a colleague about a driver who has violated the law.

“I can’t tell you how many times our cars have been hit while parked,” Malone said.

Lt. Les Lovell with the El Dorado County Sheriff’s Department is in favor having California’s law more stringent like Nevada’s.

“The reality is I think it should be applied to every thoroughfare. This is a good public safety law that keeps people from being injured,” Lovell said.

For more information about Move Over, [click here](#).

Nevada wildlife officials want \$1 mil. to fight conflicts

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada wildlife officials are preparing a \$1 million-plus proposal to respond to growing conflicts between people and wildlife but acknowledge the state's budget woes could mean the idea is dead on arrival.

Bears are continuing to raid garbage and break into homes. Coyotes carry off pets. Raccoons make themselves a mask-faced nuisance. All are situations that have people asking for help that often isn't available, said Rob Buonamici, chief game warden for the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Read the whole story

Bay Area developer with ties to NV casinos raided by feds

By John Simerman, Josh Richman, Robert Salonga and Lisa Vorderbrueggen, Contra Costa Times

CONCORD — Federal agents raided the headquarters of the Seeno family development empire Thursday, hauling out stacks of documents from two office buildings at the heart of a 70-year-old home-building dynasty that has shaped much of East Bay suburbia.

About 30 agents from the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service criminal investigation division and the U.S. Secret Service served search warrants about 8 a.m. at the offices of Discovery Builders and the Albert D. Seeno Construction Co., both in the 4000 block of Port Chicago Highway.

Outside, an FBI spokesman declined to discuss the nature of the probe or what type of records the agents sought, but said they made no arrests. The IRS often joins in investigations

that involve possible financial crimes, said spokesman Joseph Schadler. He said he could not say why the Secret Service was involved. Secret Service officials acknowledged assisting in the raid but referred questions back to the FBI.

Read the whole story

Water agency threesome alleged in court documents

By Denny Walsh, Sacramento Bee

Threatened with the loss of her job, the former administrative manager of the El Dorado County Water Agency entered into a long-term sexual relationship with her boss, former agency General Manager William T. Hetland, the woman claims in a lawsuit filed Friday in Sacramento federal court.

The relationship evolved into three-way sex, commonly referred to as a ménage à trois, involving Cathy A. Monaghan, her husband Daniel E. Monaghan II, and Hetland, Monaghan alleges in the suit filed on her behalf by civil rights attorney Johnny Griffin III.

Read the whole story