

Court: Public officials' personal email not shielded

By Maura Dolan, Los Angeles Times

Texts and emails sent by public employees on their personal devices or accounts are a matter of public record if they deal with official business, the California Supreme Court ruled Thursday in a unanimous decision hailed by open-government advocates.

But the court provided only general guidance on where the line would be drawn, posing a challenge for cities and counties forced to balance employees' privacy against the public's right to know.

The court said that communications sent on personal cell phones and computers must be disclosed to the public if they "relate in some substantive way to the conduct of the public's business."

Read the whole story

EDC hoping state, feds pay for storm damage

The state and feds are expected to pick up the bulk of the \$14.3 million in storm damage that El Dorado County has sustained this winter.

Both sides of the county have been hit hard, with some roads – like Elks Club – still not completely drivable. The county has

identified 22 emergency projects.

The bulk of the damage is on the West Slope, with \$2.9 million needed to repair the Cosumnes River Mine Road bridge the most expensive.

Because the Board of Supervisors and Gov. Jerry Brown have declared a state of emergency there is money available from the state Office of Emergency Services and FEMA. After reimbursements the county's bill should be closer to \$800,000.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Remnants of SnowGlobe staying until snow leaves

By Kathryn Reed

SnowGlobe has gone from a noise nuisance to a visual eye-sore.

Remnants from the three-day musical festival in December are beginning to make a section of Al Tahoe Boulevard look blighted. And it's bound to just look worse as the snow melts.

City officials and the promoter are saying the snow after the conclusion of the last show on Dec. 31 prevented vendors from picking up their stuff.

"We are working with our South Lake Tahoe based production team daily, monitoring for changes in the snowpack that will allow us a window of opportunity to safely continue our load-out as planned," Chad Donnelly, SnowGlobe promoter, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "It's hard to know exactly when that will be – but as soon as that day arrives, we'll be on it."



SnowGlobe items, including the structures in the back, remain more than two months after the event. Photo/LTN

According the promoter, the stage was down Jan. 2 and the shipping containers were removed approximately one month ago.

May is likely when everything will be removed. That is what the city has previously said.

In the meantime, residents get to look at what's been left behind from this city-sanctioned rave. The chain link fence that was put up to keep people out is falling. In places it looks like dangerous twisted metal.

Just inside the grounds, which are not completely fenced off, is a pallet of bottled water. Empty wood pallets are stacked nearby. Machinery and portable buildings are also inside the event space.

Then there are the orange cones that had been put near the school district's bus barn and the entrance to the jail for those walking to the venue. They are starting to show as the snow melts. It's obvious some of have been chewed up by snow removal equipment.

Donnelly placed responsibility for leaving behind a mess on one of the vendors.

“The modular offices are property of United and I’ve been told they aren’t able to transport them in inclement weather due to CHP regulations. The vast majority of the issues are attributed to one vendor’s inability to get to the site on the scheduled load out days, remove their assets without damaging them and finally transporting them,” Donnelly said.



The fence for SnowGlobe is a pile of metal in many places.
Photo/LTN

This is a brand new field that taxpayers paid for with the assumption it would be used for sports. So far, it’s only use has been for the music festival.

The sod won’t go in until the garbage beneath the snow that SnowGlobers left behind is picked up. Then the local residents will finally get to use what it is theirs.

The city said no environmental hazards are expected from what is sitting on the field.

“The contract states that the applicant must return to the site following all snow melt to ensure complete clean up. We have a \$25,000 deposit from the producer to ensure this is complete,” City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Vehicles being broken into in South Tahoe

Nine people had items stolen from their vehicle in South Lake Tahoe between Feb 20-25.

Six of the reports were in the Tahoe Island area. The majority of the vehicles were unlocked, according to officer.

Two vehicles were reported stolen Feb. 24. A 2010 Silver Nissan Altima was stolen overnight from the 1100 block of Herbert Avenue. The vehicle has since been recovered. A 2009 Silver Subaru WRX, Nevada license plate 746LLW, was stolen from the 800 block of Michael Drive. The vehicle has a dent on the driver side front bumper as well as mounts for a roof rack.

Prevention tips from SLTPD:

- Install a vehicle alarm or mechanical lock for the steering wheel or ignition.
- Lock the doors and leave the windows rolled up.
- Activate any alarms or anti-theft devices.
- Keep valuables out of sight and/or remove them from the vehicle. Expensive items in full view invite theft even if the vehicle is locked.

- Do not leave money, checkbooks, or credit cards in the vehicle at any time.

Suspicious activity should be reported to 530.542.6100.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Nev. bill would set up broadband growth

By Ben Botkin, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Nevada's fiber optic network may get another tool for expansion.

Lawmakers are considering Senate Bill 53, which would authorize the Nevada Department of Transportation and telecommunications companies to work together to grow the state's fiber optic network in a way that benefits both the public and private sectors.

The bill, sponsored by Gov. Brian Sandoval's Office of Science, Innovation and Technology, was heard Tuesday in the Senate Transportation Committee. No immediate action was taken.

Read the whole story

Property taxes an issue for Nev. legislators

By Thomas Moore, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY – Homeowners may not think about property taxes often, but Nevada's county and city government officials do. During this year's Legislature, they're busy asking state lawmakers to change the property tax abatement, or the cap, that limits how much larger your property tax bill can grow from one year to the next.

The cap, enacted in 2005, those officials say, has caused revenues from property taxes to stay at roughly the same levels they were before the recession even though – as the economy improves – the demand for services from local governments has grown.

As they testified before legislative committees, local government representatives listed services they said are suffering from flat revenues, chief among them education and public safety.

[Read the whole story](#)

Study: Calif. worst state for first-time home buyer

By Alessandra Malito, Market Watch

California has beautiful beaches, plenty of sunshine and the Terminator for a former governor, but it doesn't have many

homes for the first-time buyer.

In fact, the state is the toughest to break into for those looking to get their first homes, according to a report released Tuesday by personal finance site Bankrate.com, followed by Hawaii and New York.

California was ranked with low home affordability and availability and simply put, has not kept up with housing demand, despite the qualities it has to attract many to its coastal scene.

Read the whole story

No charge from CHP for helicopter rescues



CHP regularly uses its helicopter to help people in distress in the Tahoe region. Photo/EDSO

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

Q: In cases like the snowboarder who had to be rescued after he skied out of bounds at the Heavenly Mountain Ski Resort, is he charged for the cost of the CHP helicopter and those who risked their lives to rescue him?

George, Sacramento

A: Officer Matt Causie, a paramedic with the California Highway Patrol's Valley Division Air Operations, said some counties may charge for search and rescue operations, but the CHP does not bill the people it rescues.

The CHP's air operations, he said, are funded by motor vehicle fees and are intended to provide blanket coverage for counties that might not have their own air resources.

Read the whole story

Ride-hailing drivers could bring cash to Nev.

By Sandra Chereb, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY — Ride-hailing companies would have to verify that their drivers have state business licenses under a bill introduced Tuesday in the Nevada Senate.

Senate bill 226, sponsored by the Committee on Commerce, Labor and Energy, would require transportation network companies such as Uber and Lyft to submit quarterly reports to the Nevada Transportation Authority.

Read the whole story

California likely to see more extreme flooding

By Lauren Sommer, KQED-TV

Californians are in shock that after five years of too little water, the problem now is too much.

All eyes in California have been on Oroville Dam, where a broken spillway forced major evacuations. But the damage from winter storms has gone beyond the dam in the northern part of the state. Downstream, rivers are running high and levees have been breaching.

But this shouldn't be a surprise, says Noah Diffenbaugh, a climate scientist at Stanford University. He says California is likely to see more extreme flooding with climate change. And the reason is pretty simple. If it's warmer, storms produce more rain instead of snow.

Read the whole story