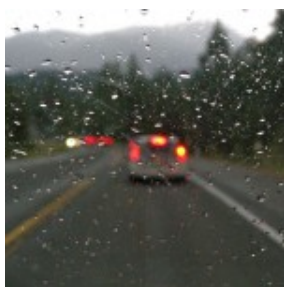


Tahoe's spastic weather not uncommon, officials say

By Kathryn Reed

Even though the National Weather Service says nothing much out of the ordinary is happening with the weather in the greater Lake Tahoe area, it is providing plenty fodder for locals and tourists.

Today might require a jacket with highs in the basin barely touching 70. Sunday produced hail that looked like golf balls. Less than a month ago South Tahoe was recording a record high and back in May posted a record low. Reno just came off tying a record for number of days of 90-degree temps or higher.



It was a soggy drive over Echo Summit into South Tahoe on Aug. 8.

Photos/Kathryn Reed

"It's not different (this summer)," according to Jessica Kielhorn, meteorologist technician with the National Weather Service in Reno.

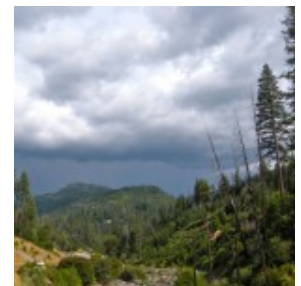
Today should be the coldest day of the week in the basin and

stretching to the Carson Valley and up to Reno. It will be cooler and drier, with no thunderstorms in sight.

Lake Tahoe isn't the only place with cooler than normal temps. The Bay Area has been chilly compared to most summers. In the Central Valley cool weather is affecting the tomato harvest.

While Tahoe has been mild when it comes to mercury readings, on Aug. 8 Reno tied a record at 35 days of temperatures at 90 degrees or higher. It had the exact same 35-day run in 2008 (July 5-Aug. 8), and did the 35 days in 2005, too.

"We're looking to warm back up over the weekend," Kielhorn said of the Tahoe-Reno area. "We have a ridge of high pressure moving in after this trough."

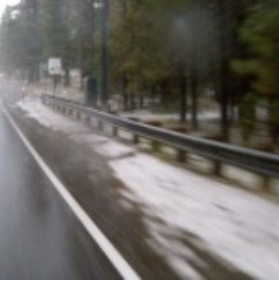


Dark clouds sit over the basin on Aug. 8.

South Lake Tahoe and Tahoe City should hit the mid-70s by the end of the week. Both ends of the lake should be in the mid-80s Sunday and Monday. Reno will be close to triple digits at that time.

While afternoon thunderstorms are not uncommon in the basin in July and August, the hail has surprised some locals. For those from the Midwest, summer hailstorms are no big deal.

Hail is tiny pieces of ice that bounce through freezing thunderclouds.



Hail piles up near the Y in South Tahoe on Aug. 8.

And bounce they did near the Y on Aug. 8. A weather spotter for the NWS reported the ice formation as 1-inch in diameter in some cases. Driving by Lake Tahoe Airport it looked like snow on the ground.

Puddles from the storm still sat on some city streets two days later.

With the relatively fast moving storms, and definitely isolated showers, it is not affecting the lake level much. On Aug. 10 it was 1.3 feet above its natural rim.

The declining water level has caused some boat launches to close for the season. Coon Street Boat Launch in Kings Beach closed earlier this month and Tahoe Vista Recreation Area launch closed Aug. 9.

Even though a nip is in the air and some people are using that four-letter word – fall – to describe what it feels like outside, the forecast is for normal temps for at least the next week or so.

This is welcome news considering it seems like winter just ended.

It was back on July 17 that South Lake Tahoe hit a record high of 90 degrees, beating the old record by 1 degree. It was May 23 that the low of 19 degrees set a record, beating the old

one by 6 degrees.