

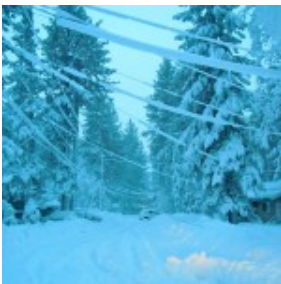
Sense of normalcy returns with power on in most of Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

About 200 customers on the South Shore are still without power as crews from Sierra Pacific Power continue to rectify the problem.

A handful of customers around the lake are also off the grid.

“All three of the circuits that had been knocked out of service yesterday by falling trees and tree limbs are back in service. Sierra Pacific Power has fresh crews at work restoring service for the customers still affected by outages and we hope to have electric service restored to everyone sometime tonight,” Karl Walquist, spokesman for the utility said late Thursday morning.



Sagging and downed power lines were the norm Wednesday in Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Those in the Al Tahoe neighborhood of South Lake Tahoe heard

furnaces turn on about 3am.

Although South Tahoe opened the rec center as refuge Wednesday night, no one showed up.

When the power is out and temperatures begin to plummet, freezing pipes are always a concern. Typically South Tahoe Public Utility District does not recommend running water because of the waste involved and then having to treat it as sewage.

However, South Tahoe PUD spokesman Dennis Cocking said on a temporary basis in circumstance like the night of Dec. 29 it's reasonable to keep a trickle of water flowing to prevent pipes from freezing.

Heat tape and keeping the house warm, then opening cabinet doors where the pipes are, are the normal ways to help prevent pipes from freezing.

STPUD had to contend with the power outage on Wednesday with generators. The district has a five-day supply of diesel on hand for such occasions.

Continued cold and snowy weather are in the forecast for the Lake Tahoe area through Monday. While the low tonight in South Tahoe is expected to be 1 degree, it is nowhere near the minus 11 degrees Truckee recorded for this date in 1911.

Highs will hover in the high 20s, low 30s through Monday. A chance of snow is forecast for this afternoon, Friday night and for the weekend.