

S. Tahoe going after sign violators; Placer County eases rules

By Kathryn Reed

While South Lake Tahoe officials are cracking down on vehicles driving around with signs in the back of pickups advertising charity events and churches that use sandwich boards, Placer County is relaxing its sign ordinance.

Bob Albertazzi, community police officer for South Tahoe, said because the sandwich board sign was not secure in the back of the truck, it was considered an illegal sign. The sign was advertising Rotary's annual raffle ticket for a car giveaway. This is one of the service club's main fund-raisers – with most of the money then going back to the community.



South Tahoe is cracking down on signs, but has used sandwich boards for its own garage. Photo/LTN

“The sandwich board was in the back of the pickup. That was an illegal sign because it was a sandwich board. If they try to

drive that pickup, it would have flown out and it is not considered part of the vehicle," Albertazzi explained.

But on the other end of the lake, Placer County Board of Supervisors agreed this month to relax county ordinances relating to the placement of signs for businesses as a way to stimulate the economy. The idea is if people can better see a business, the business will get more customers.

The change in Placer County is not expected to be permanent.

"Sign restrictions remain to address sign issues that affect health and safety, such as conflicts with vehicle traffic and sight distance, and aesthetic issues, such as overuse of portable and bright signs, and clutter," according to Placer County officials.

In South Tahoe, Albertazzi admitted to having been lax in his enforcement of churches using sandwich boards on the weekends to direct people to services. He now intends to crackdown on them as well.

In addition to sandwich boards, banners and flags are also not allowed in South Tahoe.

Most of the rules regarding signs in the Lake Tahoe Basin originated with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. Chapter 26 of the Regional Plan talks about the TRPA sign regulations.