

Sac County man dies at Sierra, avalanche injures Kirkwood skier

Updated: 9:45pm March 18, 2012

By Kathryn Reed

One person died and another was seriously injured at two Lake Tahoe area ski resorts March 18.

Yiwei Hu, 54, of Gold River died at Sierra-at-Tahoe, according to El Dorado County sheriff's deputies, after he fell into a deep hole created by an underflow of water in the Castle Creek area.

"When patrol arrived (at 1:20pm) they initiated life-saving procedures, but were unable to resuscitate the skier," Sierra spokesman Steve Hemphill told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Castle Creek is in the trees off Castle run, which is accessed from the Grandview chairlift.

While Tahoe resorts have received multiple feet of snow in less than a week, tree skiing has been sketchy at best until now. It has been snowing all day at Sierra.

At Kirkwood Mountain Resort an avalanche occurred in Sentinel Bowl at 2:14pm. This area is in-bounds. One person was able to ride out to alert ski patrol of the slide, while his friend was trapped.

With snow falling all day, helicopter transport was not an option. Lake Valley paramedics brought the person, whose name is not being released, to Barton Memorial Hospital. Alpine County Sheriff's Department said they would not release details until Monday.

Michael Dalzell, spokesman for Kirkwood, said he does not have details on the slide and it has not been classified.

The Sierra Avalanche Center rated the slide danger as moderate for Sunday.

Dalzell said Chair 6 was closed as soon as the avalanche was reported. Crews worked in the area to test the snow stability, with the all clear coming at 4:33pm.

Kirkwood in the last 24 hours received between 12 and 18 inches of snow, with nearly 5 feet in the last week.