

Six area construction sites cited for worker comp violations

Six citations were issued for workers' comp violations against firms doing construction in South Lake Tahoe as part of a statewide sweep of illegal construction sites in June.

The California Contractors State License Board, which conducted the operation in conjunction with the state Department of Insurance, Employment Development Department and county district attorneys' offices, is not releasing any names of the companies while investigations are ongoing. But of the 14 job sites in the Lake Tahoe-area that were checked, seven of them have some type of pending action, indicating that 50 percent of the randomly checked job sites were out of compliance with either state contracting, insurance, or labor laws, or a combination of state laws, Melanie Bedwell, a CSLB spokeswoman, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

In South Lake Tahoe, three investigations and audits were opened.

The statewide sweep targeted 133 contractors in 11 counties, where 104 enforcement actions were issued for failure to carry workers' compensation insurance, under-reporting the number of workers to obtain cheaper insurance premiums and to pay less payroll withholding tax, and cash payment to hide unregulated practices.

"Participants in the state's underground economy are harmful to everyone," said CSLB Registrar Steve Sands in statement. "Anyone who neglects their responsibility to comply with state contracting, insurance, and payroll requirements drives up premiums. At the same time, legitimate licensed contractors struggle because illegal operators underbid them."

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*