

South Tahoe hitting non-tax paying rentals

South Lake Tahoe has collected nearly \$40,000 this year in two cases of people who were not paying transient occupancy tax money for their vacation rentals.

South Lake Tahoe Police Department, which runs the vacation home rental department for the city, conducts routine audits to ensure TOT is being collected.

A recent audit of a vacation home rental yielded just more than \$14,800 in TOT and penalties. The owner denied renting out the vacation home despite evidence to the contrary, according to city officials. When the owner refused to voluntarily comply, a criminal investigation was conducted which showed the owner had been renting out the vacation home since at least 2008.

The owner eventually opted to comply by becoming permitted. Had he not, felony embezzlement of public fund charges could have been pressed.

Earlier this year, another routine audit totaled more than \$24,000 in past TOT fees. That owner arranged a payment plan.

Owners who fail to pay TOT as required are stealing from the city, according to Police Chief Brian Uhler. TOT is one of the city's three main revenue sources.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report