

STPUD in the market for new vehicle



South Tahoe PUD's hydrovac truck is nearly 20 years old. Photo/LTN

South Tahoe Public Utility District has a vehicle that is so old the state Air Resources Board says its days are numbered for being able to legally be on the streets.

It has been around since 1997. By 2017 it has to be pulled from service because the parts to upgrade it to state standards cannot be found.

A business in another state, like Nevada with its less stringent air regulations, is where a buyer for this apparatus will likely be found. Brand new it cost \$174,000. Today the price tag is \$330,000.

"Wherever this goes, it never turns off," explained Randy Curtis of STPUD. That only exacerbates the air quality issue.

He gave the district board a demonstration earlier this month about how the hydrovac truck works.

"If we do have a spill, this is what we use to clean it up with," Curtis said.

Another use is excavation work on streets. It can clean out a

4-foot-by-4-foot area down 6 feet without impacting other infrastructure below ground. It can clean up to a 24-inch line.

It sucks all the material out so crews can get the water or sewer line. The material it collects is then deposited at the district's South Lake Tahoe headquarters in what is called the "bone yard."

The board has yet to approve the expenditure of funds on a new piece of equipment.

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Notes:

- The South Tahoe Public Utility District board of directors will have a public hearing on the budget May 7 from 6-7:30pm in the district board room, 1275 Meadow Crest Drive, South Lake Tahoe.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*