

Wacky weather to linger for a couple more days



Hail gathers along Highway 89 in Truckee on July 8. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

Rumbling, crackling and flashes of white light. It's just another day in Lake Tahoe. Oh, and there is fresh snow on Tioga Pass.

Hail has been common with this series of storms that is now in its second week. On July 8 golf-ball size hail was recorded in South Lake Tahoe. More typical has been marble-size hail. It has gathered in places to the point it looks like snow.

While summer thunderstorms are not uncommon in the region, they usually don't hang around this long or come at all hours of the day and night.

"This pattern has been very persistent in that it hasn't shifted," Alex Hoon, meteorologist with National Weather Service in Reno told *Lake Tahoe News*. "A high pressure over

the Great Basin brings moisture up from the south.” These are monsoon-like storms.

In the last 36 hours a low pressure has come over California, which is cooling things down.

South Lake Tahoe’s high on Wednesday was 69, while it was 85 in Reno. Normally these two cities are 80 and 91, respectively. Today’s high in the city is slated to be 65 degrees, while it may reach 78 in Reno.

South Lake received 0.39 inches of rain on July 8 and 0.05 inches on July 7. Truckee on Wednesday recorded 0.11 inches. In Little Valley, which on the other side of Diamond Peak between Incline Village and Washoe Lake, the rain total was 0.57 inches.

Douglas County on Wednesday issued a disaster declaration for parts of the valley because of the flooding. The declaration will allow the county to call in additional crews to help clear roads, remove debris and repair public infrastructure that continues to be damaged as repeated storms cause flash flooding.

The most recent flash flood was primarily concentrated in the Stephanie Lane and Johnson Lane areas. Approximately 141 homes have been recorded as possibly having water and structural damage and an unknown number of homes with landscape damage, according to the Douglas County Sheriff’s Department.

The Johnson Lane Firehouse Station 6 is being used as the local field office for citizens to report damage. Sandbags are available at Fire Station 6 on Stephanie Lane.

While the moisture is welcome in this fourth year of drought, it is wreaking havoc on traditional summer businesses in Tahoe. Ski resort gondolas and trams can’t run when there is even a threat of lightning, and boat-paddle-bike rentals come to a grinding halt.

Thunderstorms are still in the forecast and remain so through the weekend, though with a diminishing chance.

By next week the weather is expected to return to normal – dry, a little breezy and in the 80s at the lake.