

WCSO helicopter grounded after laser strike

Washoe County Sheriff's Office helicopter pilot had to make an unexpected landing at Stead Airport in Reno after the pilot and tactical flight observer were struck several times by a laser in their eyes.

They were taken to a local hospital for treatment and have since been released.

On Sept. 1 at approximately 8:30pm the Raven helicopter was on routine patrol over downtown Reno when it was struck by a laser coming from the area of Rampion Drive in Sun Valley. While attempting to determine an exact location the laser struck the two on board.

According to Raven Chief Pilot Deputy Doug Russell, "Laser strikes on aircraft is an increasing problem in the Truckee Meadows area." CareFlight and commercial airlines have also reported laser strikes in recent months.

Aiming a laser at an aircraft creates a serious safety risk that violates local and federal law. It is a felony in the Nevada to aim a laser at any aircraft.

Secret Witness is offering a \$1,500 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the individual responsible for Tuesday's incident. Anyone who may have information useful to the investigation is asked to call the Washoe County Sheriff's Office Detective Division at 775.328.3320 or Secret Witness at 775.322.4900.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report