

EDC voters may be asked to raise snow removal tax

By Kathryn Reed

El Dorado County residents in the basin have been griping about the quality of snow removal service this winter.

It's hard to keep up with the storms when the equipment is in the shop.

"We will be getting one new snowplow that we purchase this year that will be ready for next year. But we, during the snowstorms earlier this year, three of the six snowplows in South Lake Tahoe were not working. I think we have three now that are over 40 years old," Pedretti told the Board of Supervisors in February. "It's a wonder that our guys can keep them going at all. So, we have those problems."

On the South Shore area property owners pay \$20 annually for snow removal, while the fee is \$50 on the West Shore in the Tahoma area.

The county is looking at going to voters this year, probably in November, to raise those fees.

"We haven't decided on an exact number as of today. We calculate that it would cost approximately \$55 annually for the West Shore, and \$50 for the South Shore, to offset the cost of purchasing snowblowers and graders used for snow removal," Pedretti told *Lake Tahoe News*. "However, this does not include the cost for ongoing maintenance of the snow removal equipment or the extra cost of staff that work during snow storms. These costs have not been included in the 'fees' in the past and we have not yet decided whether to attempt to recover a portion of these costs or not."