

Snowmaking technology allows skiing in summer

By Allen Best, Live Science

In early July at Boreal Mountain Resort, temperatures reached 91 degrees, which is not uncharacteristically here. The real surprise was that the ski area near Lake Tahoe was making snow.

Boreal is the site of the first North American demonstration of a relatively new technology called Snowfactory. The process parallels that of an industrial ice maker – essentially, a large-scale version of the ice maker in the door of many household refrigerators.

An ice maker takes water chilled with a heat exchanger and sprays it onto a surface. The cubes are created by imposing the ice onto a grid. In a unit about the size of a trailer, such as the type pulled by 18-wheeler trucks, Snowfactory uses the same process to produce flat flakes that are collected on a panel and fed into a conveyor belt. The flakes are then blown through a pipe up to 600-feet long to the desired location on the ski slope.

Read the whole story