

Severe storm warning for Sierra



California Conservation Corps members help Lake Tahoe Community College on Jan. 18 with snow removal. Photo/LTN

By Lake Tahoe News

Caltrans is alerting motorists traveling to the Sierra, particularly those using Interstate 80 over Donner Summit or Highway 50 over Echo Summit, to be prepared for significant travel delays through Monday.

Expect passes to be closed at times either for avalanche control or to clear wrecks. For current road conditions, click on the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News*.

Non-essential travel is being discouraged on Sunday and Monday, even on local streets.

The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a winter storm

warning through 4am Monday. "Travel into the Sierra on Sunday could be nearly impossible. Strongly consider staying at home on Sunday," the agency says.

Liberty Utilities and Nevada Energy anticipate outages as snow and trees bring down lines. Prepare in advance by having other sources of lighting and heat, and keeping communication devices charged.

Residents in Tahoe-Truckee are reminded to clear gas meters of snow and are encouraged to clear neighborhood fire hydrants.

Backcountry adventure could be deadly. Ski resorts are having a hard enough time keeping up with conditions.

Sierra-at-Tahoe on Jan. 20 issued this statement, "The forecast is calling for an additional 3-4 feet of snow to fall throughout the weekend with as much as 3 inches falling per hour at points, so please be patient as we work to get lifts spinning and trails open. This is what dreams are made of, but guest safety is always our top priority, which means delayed starts and limited operations are sometimes necessary during the variable conditions we're expected to face throughout the weekend. If it's closed, it's closed for a reason. Please respect all closures and signage."

Squaw Valley's record snowfall for January came during the 1981-82 season with 175 inches. In the first 20 days of this year, the resort has received 115 percent of that accumulation.

The U.S. Forest Service office in South Lake Tahoe will be closed Monday because of the storm.

Waste Management in Incline Village will close collection and transfer station operations on Jan. 23 because of the incoming storm. Residential collection will occur Jan. 28 for customers who are missed Monday. Commercial collection will be Jan. 26.

El Dorado County continues to deal with infrastructure problems because of the January storms. In the Tahoe, staff have been working 24 hours a day to plow roads, clear blocked drains due to snow berms, and remove downed trees.

There is a sinkhole on Arapahoe Road between San Diego Street and Country Club Drive.

Current West Slope road closures:

- Fort Jim Road at Newtown Road – failing drainage structure.
- Kyburz Drive – mudslide/trees/ debris blocking drainage. Will take several days to remove. Local access available for residents.
- Weber Creek at Jurgens/Luneman – low water crossing flooded and unsafe for vehicle traffic.
- Cosumnes Mine Road at North Fork of Cosumnes River – bridge approach failure. In addition, other sections of the road not associated with the bridge, have slid down the slope.
- Peavine Ridge Road just to the north of Highway 50 – The road is slipping.

County staff has been responding to calls regarding hundreds of downed trees, flooding, potholes, and small and large slides. The most significant slides have occurred along Salmon Falls Road, Rock Creek Road, Mosquito Road, Newtown Road, Forni Road, and Hassler Road.