

# Truckee to declare emergency, more snow coming



Personal snowplows have been in overdrive and will continue to be needed through Thursday. Photo/Kim Wyatt

## **Updated 9:10pm:**

It's not over. A winter storm warning for Tahoe-Truckee is in effect until 10pm Thursday. Another 4 to 8 inches is expected at the lake, with more than a foot above 7,000 feet.

Liberty Utilities has approximately 6,500 locations still without power tonight.

"We cannot guarantee restoration times, however, we will continue to provide updates as they are available," Liberty spokeswoman Kathy Carter said in a statement.

Truckee's town council is meeting Jan. 12 at 5:45pm at the airport to declare a state of emergency.

As power is restored, the North Tahoe Public Utility District is asking all customers to continue to limit water usage as much as possible through the duration of the power outage, even if the power is restored to your home. It is important to help keep flows down as other areas may still be running on generator power.

"District crews will continue to work around the clock to keep sewer flowing in the system and water to homes," stated utility operations manager Ken Fischer.

The district operates 18 sewer pump stations that move the sewage along Highway 28 or out of low lying areas to, then up and over Dollar Hill. Generators are being used to pump down sewer stations, but they require fueling and maintenance and crews are stretched thin. In addition, sewer flows are already high due to inflow and infiltration of runoff into the sewer system via manholes and customer sewer clean outs.

While the risk of sewer overflows is the greatest concern, the district is also running the water system on temporary generator power to run the National Avenue Water Treatment Plan and pump water throughout the district.

With the continuing winter storms in the Lake Tahoe area and an avalanche near Truckee, the U.S. Postal Service has made the rare decision to suspend operations at select offices. A lack of power and access has necessitated the temporary closure of the following post offices:

- Carnelian Bay
- Homewood
- Incline Village
- Kings Beach
- Olympic Valley
- Tahoe City

- Tahoe Vista
- Truckee
- Tahoma.

Nevada Department of Transportation has signed emergency contracts to repair erosion and other flood-related roadway damage. The repairs follow tours of the damage taken by Governor Sandoval and local officials both before and after the flood.

Contractors on Wednesday started to make roadway shoulder repairs, repair flood damage and rebuild roadway drainage on Pyramid and Gerlach highways. Highway 446 running along the bottom of Pyramid Lake is closed. The road sustained the greatest flood damage of any state road, with many sections of roadway completely washed away and approximately 50-foot drop-offs created by erosion. Full damages have been assessed, and repairs anticipated to start in coming weeks. With a massive amount of earthwork needed to rebuild the roadway, no timeframe for reopening is established.

Kingsbury Grade remains closed between Tramway Drive and Foothill Drive on the Carson Valley side. There is no timeframe for reopening it.

Lingering damages are still being fully assessed as storm waters subside, and additional road repairs may be needed to state roads east of Reno and Carson City. Repairs are estimated to cost approximately \$6.5 million with a large portion of costs going to reconstruction of Highway 446. Federal reimbursement is anticipated for much of the repairs.

The rain and snow fall has caused infrastructure problems in El Dorado County. There is a substantial amount of snow in Tahoe in the area and crews are working to address the continued situation.

The following is an update of road closures outside the basin:

- 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.
- Hackamiller Road just past Garden Valley Road – washed out road.
- 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 experienced slope failure taking part of the road down the slope.
- Mormon Emigrant Trail at Sly Park Road – there are unsafe conditions on the road. Should reopen this weekend.

In addition, 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.

Lake Tahoe Community College is planning to open at 8am Thursday. Campus roads and parking lots are clear, and power is on. President Kindred Murillo's farewell lunch is now Jan. 13 at noon. For info, call 530.541.4660, ext. 245.

The Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Forest Supervisor's Office on College Drive in South Lake Tahoe will open Thursday at noon to the public. Staff will evaluate facilities around the basin during the day.

Squaw Valley is planning a delayed opening Thursday with limited terrain.



South Tahoe fire and Liberty Utilities crews work on downed power lines. Photo/Provided

**Updated 2:15pm:**

South Lake Tahoe officials are reporting dangerous conditions throughout town. The snow is a bit slushy now and people are not driving well.

Through town Highway 50 is one lane in each direction, with snow so high in the center it's hard to see oncoming traffic. Some drivers think they can cross the snow and are getting stuck.

"It's going to take us all day to push the snow back," City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The snowplow drivers will be out all day continuing to plow residential streets and widening streets. Berms are to be expected."

The North Tahoe Public Utility District, in cooperation with Placer County Office of Emergency Services, is opening the conference room at the district offices at 875 National Ave.

in Tahoe Vista as a warming station. Residents or visitors in need can come in, grab some coffee, warm up and charge their cell phone or other devices. The district building is operating on generator power.

The North Tahoe Public Utility District is asking all customers to limit water usage as much as possible through the duration of the power outage as utility crews work to keep sewage flowing along the North Shore.

IVGID administrative, public works offices, Diamond Peak, and the Incline Village Recreation Center are closed today, and will reopen Thursday at 8am.

The good news is the sun is out in some areas.

Interstate 80 is open. Highway 50 over Echo Summit is open with chain controls. Motorists may be held intermittently for avalanche control operations. Highway 89 over Emerald Bay is currently closed due to avalanche hazards.

Caltrans is reminding people they are required to carry chains even if driving a 4- or all-wheel drive vehicle with mud and snow rated tires.

Motorists using cable (ladder) chains may be turned around on Highway 267 at the Northstar and Kings Beach chain control checkpoints.



Spooner Summit on Wednesday afternoon is a mess. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

The Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City will be closed for approximately 10 days to clean up damage sustained during severe weather this week. The main museum took on some water, but exhibits and historic collections were not damaged.

Truckee Donner PUD is responding to power outages caused by the blizzard. TDPUD was experiencing a series of localized outages on Tuesday evening due to falling trees when TDPUD lost transmission power to the entire district and all customers lost power. Crews have been working all night and today to restore transmission power at which time TDPUD can begin to restore power to our customers.

The loss of NV Energy transmission power was caused by a large tree that fell near Coachland about 10pm on Tuesday night. NV Energy crews started working on repairs about 2am on Wednesday and continue to effect repairs.

Once the main system power is restored, there will still be isolated outages due mostly to falling trees on TDPUD's distribution system and on secondary power lines feeding individual homes.

Liberty Utilities' walk in centers and customer service phone lines are closed Wednesday. About 20,000 customers without

power. All Liberty Utilities and NV Energy crews have worked together through the night.



Downed power lines in Incline Village because of toppled trees. Photo/Washoe County

As of 2pm power had been restored to a majority of customers in the Northstar, Squaw, Olympic Valley, Alpine Meadows, Glenshire, Martis Camp and Truckee areas. Liberty anticipates customers in Kings Beach, Tahoe City and Portola/Loyalton will also be restored today.

There are still challenges to restoring power from Emerald Bay to south of Homewood.

Heavenly is reporting 48 inches of snow in the last 24 hours, 108 inches in three days, and 12 feet in seven days. Northstar has 42 inches in 24 yours, 10 feet in seven days, while Kirkwood received 48 inches in the last 24 hours, 6 feet in two days and 11 feet in seven days.



Access to Pyramid Lake could take a while to restore. The road is totally washed out. The tribe is looking for **financial assistance**.

The Harlem Globetrotters 2017 World Tour stop in Reno that was scheduled for Jan. 12 at the Reno Events Center has been rescheduled for Jan. 17 at 7pm. All previously purchased tickets will be honored for the rescheduled game. Tickets are now on sale for the rescheduled show on Jan. 17.

Lake Tahoe Unified is going to be closed on Thursday.



South Lake Tahoe residents are dealing with large berms.  
Photo/Ernie Claudio

### **By Lake Tahoe News**

Snow is continuing to effect schools, commerce and travel in the greater Lake Tahoe area.

Non-essential South Lake Tahoe El Dorado County, and Placer County workers in the basin have been told not to go to work for the second straight day. This means those offices are closed to the public as well.

School closures include: Lake Tahoe Unified, Douglas County at the lake, Incline Village, Lake Tahoe Community College, Tahoe Truckee Unified, and Sierra Nevada College.

Per the Sierra Avalanche Center, the warning is high for avalanches. People are being advised not to go into the backcountry. An avalanche warning has been issued for the Tahoe through 4am Thursday.

Nevada Energy and Liberty Utilities are dealing with multiple outages that are affecting pockets in and around the greater Lake Tahoe area. A large swath of Truckee is in the dark now. With roads either being closed, having black ice this morning, or not being plowed, their crews are having a hard time even reaching the problem to be able to solve it.

“The majority of customers along the North Shore, West Shore and continuing through Truckee to Portola are without power due to a mudslide and falling trees that have damaged all of the three energy sources to the region,” Kathy Carter with Liberty said.

People are warned not to touch downed power lines, but to call 911 instead.

The power outage has closed Squaw Valley, Alpine Meadows and Northstar on Jan. 11. Sugar Bowl is closed because of no access from Interstate 80. Tahoe Donner and Homewood are closed.

Squaw-Alpine reports receiving 5 feet of snow in the past 36 hours, for a storm total of nearly 9.5 feet this week. That’s more than 13.5 feet this month.

Truckee issued this advice on Wednesday, "Travel should be restricted to only essential needs. We can reach residents in the event of an emergency, however roadways may not have been fully plowed yet and vehicles getting stuck will impact our ability to respond to emergencies." This is appropriate advice for all areas of the Tahoe basin as well.

Highway 50 over Echo Summit is open. No cannons have been going off this morning. However, that could change.

For up-to-date road information, click on the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News*.

Interstate 80 remains closed from Colfax to the Nevada state line. Highway 89 around Emerald Bay is closed. Westbound Highway 88 is closed at Picketts Junction. Highway 267 is restricted to 4-wheel drive vehicles only; vehicles with chains over Brockway Summit are not permitted. In Douglas County in the valley, Centerville Lane is closed because of flooding. Mount Rose Highway remains closed from Fairview to Douglas Fir. Kingsbury Grade is out of commission for a while because of sink hole on the Carson side; but access is available on the basin side.

Various businesses in the region have remained closed during the storms either because staff could not get to work, power has been out or they didn't expect customers to be traveling. It is advised to call ahead for the next day to make sure the entity is open.

Snow is in the forecast for the basin through Thursday. The sun should come out Friday.