

West Shore power outage continues; roads icy



Power lines are drooping on Taylor Street in South Lake Tahoe on Jan. 13 and at many locations in the basin. Photo/Susan Wood

Update 9:35pm:

Liberty Utilities restoration efforts continue throughout North and South shores.

Teams went into River Road by helicopter on Friday to assess the plan for getting crews in safely. A helicopter is coming in from Southern California early afternoon Saturday and will drop crews and equipment into the region to begin restoration that is expected to take several days. Snowcats and

snowmobiles will be used to get crews and equipment into Tahoe Pines on Saturday.

Tahoe City PUD is open until 5pm daily for residents to provide a warming center where residents can recharge phones, use WiFi, and warm up. They are not able to accept dogs. They can be contacted at 530.583.3705. The address 221 Fairway Drive, Tahoe City.

More than 2,000 homes on the West Shore were checked by a team of approximately 30 deputies, firefighters, paramedics and trained volunteers from various agencies. The goal was to assess the welfare of those who have been without power and may have potential challenges with access to services.

There were more than 50 reports of assistance, which included assessing infrastructure damage and downed power lines, personal property damage, and assisting citizens with egress.



Clouds still linger Jan. 13 after a week of storms in Tahoe. Photo/Denise Haerr

Update 4:20pm:

Due to ongoing power outages and damage caused by extreme winter conditions on the West Shore, a coordinated safety assessment operation is taking place.

Placer County Office of Emergency Services, Placer County Sheriff's Office, North Tahoe Fire Protection District, Meeks Bay Fire Protection District, Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue, and NTFPD Community Emergency Response Team are working together.

Deputies, firefighters, paramedics and trained volunteers will be going door-to-door between Timberland and Tahoma to assess the health and welfare of residents in neighborhoods, especially elderly, mobility impaired and other at risk populations. They will also be assessing damage in the area.

Much of the area – 4,000 customers – has been without power since Jan. 8. The area has received 12 feet of snow.

Officials are asking friends and family to call 530.584.2301 if they have not heard from those known to be living in or visiting the affected area.

A warming center is open at the Tahoe City Public Utility District (221 Fairway Drive) for those residents who are unable to shelter in place. Transport will be available for those who need assistance accessing the shelter. An overnight shelter was operated at this location last night. Continued operation of the shelter for this evening is still being assessed.

With the use of helicopters, Liberty Utilities will attempt to make repairs to remote areas over the next several days as weather allows, but some customers in the River Road and Tahoe Pines areas should prepare for multiple day outages.

Liberty intends to try to reach people by phone in those areas to inform them of the progress.

Trees and branches are bound to continue to fall on wires and snap poles, causing problems for Liberty and NV Energy customers.

South Lake Tahoe customers may experience sporadic, short-term outages as crews re-energize lines. There are 200 customers on the South Shore without power. It should be restored by Sunday morning at the latest.

Homewood, Tahoma and Crystal Bay have mailbox service only, but there are no postal retail offerings until power is restored. Customers with home mail delivery are encouraged to clear mailboxes as soon as practical.

With a variety of winter weather conditions occurring across Nevada and Eastern California, the Humboldt-Toiyabe National

Forest is reminding visitors to be extra careful while recreating this winter.

Tips:

- Be aware of existing and impending weather conditions and check with the National Weather Service frequently for updates.
- Leave detailed trip plans with a person you trust.
- Do not rely on iPhones or map apps.

Caltrans crews have been focusing efforts Friday in South Lake Tahoe to get two lanes of traffic going in each direction.

Several accidents have been reported on area roads. Black ice has been a problem, along with snow and sand or other de-icing substances.

Highway 50 on the South Shore in Nevada was closed for several hours Friday while multiple wrecks were cleared.

A single vehicle rolled over on Highway 267 at 5:38am Jan. 13. The male driver in his early 20s sustained minor injuries.

Douglas County road staff have reached the maximum driving hours allowed per federal law. They are unable to return to regular duty until Jan. 17 at 7 am. If an emergency arises, staff may be called in after 5am on Sunday.

The storms brought 29 billion gallons of water to Lake Tahoe.



Ice is on roofs and the roads in Tahoe. Photo/Susan Wood

By Lake Tahoe News

Residents in the Tahoe Pines area on the West Shore (Barker Pass Road to Cherry Street) could be without power for several more days.

That area has heavy damage, with multiple poles down that requires helicopter repair. That work should start today. Liberty Utilities has restored power from Tahoe City South to Sugar Pine Road and Highway 89.

South Shore crews are deployed and working on six primary wires. Power should be back on by this afternoon.

South Lake Tahoe's City Council at the regular Jan. 17 meeting is expected to declare a state of emergency in regards to the storms that just rolled through.

The action would allow the city to seek funding from the state and federal governments to help pay for the costs associated

with dealing with the deluge of rain and snow.

Truckee, Douglas County and El Dorado County officials have all made the same declaration.

Incline Village schools are still closed, as is Tahoe Truckee Unified and Lake Tahoe Unified.

Traffic should be picking up as visitors come to the area for the long weekend. Crews will continue to clear snow as fast as they can. Highways could be closed at any time because wrecks, avalanche control or some other reason. Click on the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News* for current road conditions.

Waste Management garbage customers in Incline Village who did not receive service Thursday will have trash picked up Saturday.

Squaw Valley's record snowfall for January came during the 1981-82 season with 175 inches. In the first 12 days of January 2017, the resort has received 101 percent of that accumulation.

This week's canceled Lake Tahoe Community College board of trustees meeting is rescheduled for Jan. 17 at 6:30pm.