

Tahoe Douglas boat like floating fire hydrant



Marine 24 is a custom-built vessel from Lake Assault Boats in Wisconsin. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – High winds and waves like the ocean couldn't budge the vessel. It was on a type of auto pilot. The boat rocked to the waves, but otherwise didn't move.

Mother Nature on Monday helped demonstrate some of the sophisticated technology aboard Marine 24, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District's boat that was christened just off shore of Edgewood Tahoe.

"Skyhook technology is like an anchor. It holds the boat in position," explained Fire Marshal Eric Guevin.

This allows a firefighter to leave the helm and help with suppression, or rescuing boaters, or some other task.

It has touch point GPS, as well as sonar and radar that are

state-of-the-art. Navigation routes can be programmed. The cabin is heated, which is ideal considering the boat will be available 24/7, 365 days. Plus, if someone is rescued, it means providing them a warm place out of the elements.

Special heaters for the bilge and motors will keep them from freezing.

It is powered by two outboard engines. There is also a 365 horsepower marine motor.

“It’s only job is to pump water,” Guevin told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The 36-foot-long boat was built to handle the variable weather conditions Tahoe can encounter. Even the seats have suspension in them, which is designed to save the crews’ backs.

It will be docked at Zephyr Cove Marina, practically across the street from the fire station.



Tahoe Douglas Fire Chief Scott Baker and Fire Marshal Eric Guevin at the Nov. 14 christening of Marine 24. Photo/Kathryn Reed

There is no other boat like this on Lake Tahoe. Fire flow, or how much water can be pumped per minute, is what sets this boat apart. It can deliver a minimum of 1,500 gallons per

minute. It was shooting 1,800 on Monday. State fire codes set the standards.

Lakefront residents or business may pay a fee for a pipe that firefighters would use to connect to the new vessel and pump water. Water can also be pumped into water tenders.

With many of the roads leading to the lake on the Nevada side being narrow, it can be difficult to get the appropriate firefighting apparatus to the structure even when there isn't snow. This is why the boat is so necessary.

The boat can also be used if the forest near the shore were ablaze.

Fallen Leaf Lake has a similar boat from the same manufacturer. South Lake Tahoe is having a boat built, and North Tahoe Fire is talking about getting one.

Tahoe Douglas' old boat is still around, but isn't expected to get much action. It has an inflatable hull, doesn't have fire flow beyond 300 gallons, and is cramped. However, in the last two years it has been put into service 17 times.

In large part the nearly \$500,000 new vessel was funded by donations from Lisa Maloff, and Bob and Nackey Scagliotti.