

Boil water notice for Douglas County districts

A precautionary boil water notice has been issued for the Cave Rock Water and Skyland System in Douglas County due to a computer error at the Cave Rock Water Treatment Plant.

The notice is expected to last through Monday.

Water samples are being taken regularly. Once this process is complete and samples are clean officials will rescind the boil water notices.

The boil water notice is only precautionary at this time.

EDC supe candidates face off in debate-style forum



Devin Middlebrook moderates the May 16 candidates forum in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Susan Wood

By Susan Wood

Come June, it appears the South Shore constituency wants the winner among the four candidates running for the El Dorado County District 5 seat to think quick on his or her feet.

By the way – Kenny Curtzwiler, Sue Novasel, Norma Santiago and Jeffrey Spencer (in alphabetical order), if elected, people also like you to:

- Do your homework
- Care more about us than you
- Escalate representation in a diverse West Slope-centered board
- Make the tourists behave themselves, but leave their money here
- Advocate responsible development; yet maintain the beauty and charm of Lake Tahoe living
- Solve all of this small-town region's myriad big problems ranging from housing (permanent and vacation) as well as development to cannabis and mental health
- As an experienced government representative, keep the momentum of the solutions going; yet, as a bit of a maverick outsider, enact change in the way we do things.

And so it goes for the two women and two men from varying backgrounds, when asked pointed questions in rapid-fire succession at Wednesday night's candidates' forum at Hotel Azure in front of about 80 attendees. Some groaned, laughed, applauded and mumbled at times. Many had to pay attention at the forum hosted by the Tahoe Regional Young Professionals.

The town hall resembled a quasi-quiz show, which moderator Devin Middlebrook told *Lake Tahoe News* afterward was

established because the conventional Q&A seemed old and tired.

It was difficult not to feel a little sympathy for the candidates, who held their own and as a testament to their good graces, were quite respectful of each other. This was notable, despite the questionnaire set-up to incite a tight-ship debate in 30-, 60- and 90-second increments. Questions, which came from TRYP and the audience, were framed as hot-button issues with the majority designed to that specific candidate.

Novasel, as the incumbent, could have guessed that she'd be on the hot seat given the other three want her job, and it's easy to find things wrong in the county.

At one point, she read from the Fair Political Practices Commission regulation that explained why she needed to recuse herself from the Meyers Area Plan. That conversation was biting as expected, with Curtzwiler taking issue with her not telling voters her property ownership's role before she was elected. Then the other candidates joined in on a debate whether real property ownership in the area in question, (whether commercial or residential), should keep elected officials from representing their constituency.

"He would have to recuse himself or he would be breaking the law," Novasel said of Curtzwiler's and Spencer's holdings. To that, the latter candidate jumped in saying he owns property outside the plan area.

Santiago assisted Novasel in clarifying "the caveat is (whether there's) personal gain," and the key is to create a sense of community that can dictate a solution.

Speaking of representation, all three challengers want the Board of Supervisors to visit, vote and vie for Tahoe more often. To this, the incumbent declared the panel has come up in an unprecedented three times in a year under her leadership – which has now expanded to vice chairwoman.

In between the “thank you” nudges to wrap up or cease speaking by TRYP panelists Middlebrook and Matt Palacio, Novasel wasn’t the only one on the defensive at times.

Santiago, a community consultant who had the supervisor job for over two terms after Dave Solaro retired, found herself explaining why she sued the county she wants to work for. She explained that she joined in the lawsuit with Supervisor Ron Briggs as a way of questioning the legal process and interpretation of the compensation rules.

On monetary matters, Santiago – in her quest to advocate for new types of revenue-generating industries from broadband to biomass – jumped on Curtzwiler’s claim that his tree-removal and roofing business tried and did not find new revenue opportunity in it.

Curtzwiler was put to task with a direct question about whether he had time for the supervisor job given his commitment with his company K&K Services and his desire to be the “Ski Bum.”

He both grinned and winced as he pledged being a fulltime supervisor, turning the business over to his children and bypassing “a powder day” for an agendized workday.

Novasel quickly countered, saying the job has her working 60 hours a week – including trips to Placerville twice a week. She got in 10 ski days last year.

Spencer, who has listed a who’s who of nonprofit and other pertinent boards for experience, was still able to keep a lower profile. But how does that get one elected when voters are driven by familiar faces like his other three opponents in the public eye?

Like Novasel, the planner may take the stance of an experienced background – but of a different kind. Instead of continuing with the progress at hand as laid out by the

incumbent, Spencer supports a change in direction – especially in the area of transportation. He contends growth is “putting too much stress on infrastructure.”

After the debate, Lake Tahoe Unified School District trustee Bonnie Turnbull told *LTN* she attended the meeting to do some fact checking. The quick responses provided a glimpse of the public’s attention span, and she declared issues are “more complex” than soundbites. Nonetheless, she admitted the debate was “a nice change” sending her “home to process.”

For those of you seeking the same experience on the candidates displaying more of a premeditated style of thinking and less spastic one-liners, you may read the profiles on *Lake Tahoe News* for **Curtzwiler**, **Novasel**, **Santiago** and **Spencer**.

Shampoo, hair spray, skin lotion may be polluting the air

By Matthew Coggon, *The Conversation*

Millions of Americans apply personal care products every morning before heading to work or school. But these products don’t stick to our bodies permanently. Over the course of the day, compounds in deodorants, lotions, hair gels and perfumes evaporate from our skin and eventually make their way outdoors. Now there’s evidence to suggest that these products are major sources of air pollution in urban areas.

For decades, motor vehicles were considered the primary source of air pollutants in major U.S. cities. Vehicle exhaust

contains multiple pollutants that worsen air quality, including nitrogen oxides, particulate matter and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) – a group of reactive gases that contribute to smog formation.

Thanks to advances in catalytic converters and improvements in fuel economy, combined emissions of common pollutants from cars have decreased by 65 percent since the 1970s. Air pollution is still a problem in urban areas like Los Angeles, but only a fraction of it can be attributed to vehicles. Today, scientists are finding that other non-combustion sources – including common household products – are also major contributors.

A unique fingerprint

In a recent study with U.S. and Canadian colleagues, our lab found that these sources can include personal care products. We analyzed urban air in two cities: Boulder, Colo., and Toronto, Canada.

In Boulder, our lab had recently invested in new instrumentation, which we wanted to use to measure wood stove emissions during winter months. For five weeks we sampled air from the roof of the NOAA David Skaggs Research Center in hope of measuring air parcels contaminated with smoke from residential wood stoves. Surprisingly, we noticed a signal that stood out unexpectedly from all the other data. This compound, which we identified as decamethylcyclopentasiloxane (or D5 siloxane), contains silicon, which uniquely differs from the organic compounds we normally detect.

By reviewing scientific literature, we learned that pure D5 siloxane is produced mainly as an additive for deodorants and hair care products. On average, people use products that contain a total of about 100-200 milligrams of D5 every day – roughly the weight of half an aspirin tablet. Some fraction of these products end up going down the drain when we shower, but

the majority of what remains on our bodies ends up in the atmosphere. D5 can also be found in many other places, including soil, oceans and the tissues of fish and human beings

Many labs have studied the environmental fate of D5, but from our perspective it is particularly useful because it acts like a fingerprint. If we detect D5 in the atmosphere, we know that the air mass we measured was influenced by emissions from personal care products. By comparing the amount of D5 in the atmosphere to other fingerprint markers, such as compounds present in vehicle exhaust, we can estimate how important personal care products are as an emissions source relative to better-understood sources.

Emissions spike during morning rush hour

In Boulder and Toronto, we found that D5 was present in urban air at mass concentrations comparable to those of benzene, a chemical that is a marker for vehicle exhaust. (Benzene is a known carcinogen and is also found in industrial emissions and cigarette smoke.)

D5 concentrations were highest in the morning – the time when most people shower, apply personal care products and then leave the house to commute to work. We also observed a peak in benzene emissions in the morning, when people drive to work. During morning rush hour, we found that emissions of D5 and benzene were almost equivalent.

In other words, at this time of day, people emitted a plume of organic compounds that was comparable in mass to the plume of organic compounds emitted from their vehicles. Researchers still have a lot to learn about how these chemicals react in the atmosphere to form smog, so the air quality implications of these morning emissions remain unclear.

Benzene emissions remained high throughout the day as people drove around the city, but D5 emissions eventually tapered off

as personal care products evaporated from users' skin. We estimate that, on average, the entire population of the city of Boulder emits 3 to 5 kilograms (6 to 11 pounds) of D5 per day, and that their cars emit about 15 kilograms of benzene in vehicle exhaust.

VOC emissions from your medicine cabinet

While these numbers may seem surprisingly high, our findings support recent modeling work conducted by Brian McDonald, a co-author of this study, which showed that personal care product VOC emissions in Los Angeles now rival VOC emissions from gasoline and diesel exhaust. Taken together, these two studies demonstrate that our urban air is remarkably different from what it was decades ago. Cars today emit fewer smog-inducing organic compounds, while other sources are now becoming important contributors to air pollution.

D5 is only one component of personal care product emissions, and many other compounds could be emitted with it. To fully assess how seriously these emissions may affect the environment and human health, researchers have to answer many more questions. What other compounds enter the atmosphere after we apply personal care products? Once in the atmosphere, what happens to them? Are they capable of contributing to smog formation? Our lab and others around the country are considering these questions now in hopes of improving our understanding of urban air pollution.

Matthew Coggon is a research scientist at University of Colorado.

Water planners work to enhance snowpack data

By Christine Souza, AgAlert

Access to precise, real-time data about the amount of water in the Sierra Nevada snowpack has become more critical than ever, California water managers say, in order to assist them in making informed decisions about an ever-less-predictable supply of water.

That's why water managers came to a panel discussion about advancements in snow-measurement technology during an Association of California Water Agencies conference in Sacramento last week. The discussion focused on the Airborne Snow Observatory, or ASO program, developed by researchers at the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena.

Turlock Irrigation District Chief Hydrologist Wes Monier said TID, which co-owns Don Pedro Reservoir on the Tuolumne River, has taken advantage of the program for the past six years. Calling the ASO program "the best solution going forward for the next generation," Monier said the technology helps with flood control, minimizes downstream impacts, provides more flexibility and optimizes the system.

[Read the whole story](#)

Forest loss can harm trees on

the opposite coast

By University of Washington

Large swaths of U.S. forests are vulnerable to drought, forest fires and disease. Many local impacts of forest loss are well known: drier soils, stronger winds, increased erosion, loss of shade and habitat. But if a whole forest disappears, new research shows, this has ricocheting effects in the atmosphere that can affect vegetation on the other side of the country.

A University of Washington-led study published May 16 in Environmental Research Letters shows that forest die-offs in specific regions of the United States can influence plant growth in other parts of the country. The largest impacts seen were from losing forest cover in California, a region that is currently experiencing dramatic tree mortality.

[Read the whole story](#)

Democratic congressional ad could lead to false impressions

By Emily Cadei, Sacramento Bee

Democratic candidate Regina Bateson has sent a mailer to voters in the 4th congressional district touting her credentials ahead of the June 5 primary election. The mailer repeatedly refers to Bateson as a “military security analyst” and says that after Sept. 11, she worked to keep the country safe from terrorism.



Regina Bateson

Bateson is one of four Democrats running for the 4th district seat, which is currently held by Republican Rep. Tom McClintock. The district stretches from suburban Sacramento into the Sierra Nevada mountains, and includes Roseville and El Dorado Hills. Bateson and fellow Democrat Jessica Morse are locked in a contentious race to finish in the top two of the all-party primary, earning the right to advance to the general election against McClintock this fall. The district favors Republicans, but Democrats are hoping that local energy and unprecedented fundraising could spark an upset in November.

Read the whole story

Dems, GOP see tight Nev. race key to Senate control

By Michelle L. Price, AP

Democrats hoping to take control of the U.S. Senate in November believe one of their best chances to pick up a seat this year lies in battleground Nevada, where Sen. Dean Heller is the only Republican running for re-election in a state that Democrat Hillary Clinton carried in 2016.

Heller, who has spent nearly three decades in public office,

is expected to face Democrat Jacky Rosen, a first-term congresswoman, in what could be one of the closest Senate battles in November.

Heller says it will be a close election but he'll pull it off.

Democrats, who are anticipating a "blue wave" across the country driven by opposition to President Trump, have criticized Heller as a one-time critic of Trump's who is now tied to him.

Read the whole story

Volcanic activity a real, but slim threat to Tahoe

By Sam Gross, Reno Gazette-Journal

As images of lava rivers engulfing homes in Hawaii reach mainland viewers, thoughts turn to our region's own volcanic history, and wonder: Could it happen here?

The risk for an eruption happening within the bounds of the Silver State is slim, but that doesn't mean Nevada is totally in the clear.

The risks mostly center on volcanoes just outside the state's bounds.

Just over the border with California, two sizable and at one time destructive volcanic areas bookend the Reno-Tahoe region.

Read the whole story

S. Lake Tahoe council to restructure VHR fines

By Kathryn Reed

The South Lake Tahoe City Council on Tuesday acknowledged its fees for some vacation home rental infractions are astronomical.

The \$1,000 parking fine levied against the renter and owner is expected to be reduced to \$250, and both may not be fined in the future.

The 75 percent reduction in large part came about because of the negative national media exposure the fines garnered.

“The chamber and LTVA have received numerous complaints because of the national publicity. People are not coming,” Steve Teshara, executive director of Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, told the council May 15. He said the city’s policies are already having a serious financial impact. “It will take some time to unring the bell on the negative publicity.”

Attorney Sergio Rudin with the law firm of Burke, Williams and Sorensen was directed to bring back a resolution on June 5 with revised fees for VHR infractions. Any changes agreed to by the council would take effect immediately, so before the summer crowds arrive.

“I am sickened we are seen as a community not welcoming to tourists,” Mayor Wendy David said.

Rudin advised the council not to make changes to the existing VHR ordinance (the fees are separate from that document)

because of the pending VHR ballot initiative that could face voters in November. Rudin's law firm says it would tie the council's hands when it comes to being able to make changes to the ordinance, and that future changes would have to go to the voters. In essence it freezes the ordinance as it stands today.

Lake Tahoe News asked Rudin why not have the council make changes it wants and let those rules be the law of the land until such time any ballot initiative affecting it is approved. Rudin said that would be up to the council to decide, but said his advice was to keep the ordinance as is until the initiative process is complete.

As for parking, it has become the No. 1 VHR complaint. Noise used to have that distinction.

Maureen Stuhlman, who oversees the short-term rentals for the city, said the parking issue is leading to vigilantism. She said people calling in parking issues use it as a way to get a strike on a VHR owner, not because there was a disturbance.

Stuhlman said one person called in to report six vehicles that violated the city's ordinance. They could do so because they were driving around looking for violators. She said another person got a citation because he opted to park on the street – a no-no per the city ordinance – instead of waking his friends up to move cars around to allow him to park on the property. He thought staying on the street would be less disturbing to the neighbors than starting up a bunch of cars in the middle of the night.

Many of the calls are frivolous, a word Councilman Jason Collin used. He questioned if this is the best use of city resources.

Police Chief Brian Uhler asked for flexibility in the street parking issue as long as the visitors didn't exceed the number of vehicles allowed. Council gave consensus.

Also brought up at the meeting was how home owners' associations were supposed to be able to make some of their own rules. Councilman Austin Sass seemed most perplexed by this revelation. It showed not everyone read the final version of the ordinance that they voted on.

The resolution with more details is expected to be on the June 5 agenda.

Tahoe resident picking up trash for fun

By Ryan Canaday, KTVN-TV

Trash around Lake Tahoe is a year-round concern for residents of the area and one local is taking matters into her own hands.

With a trash picker and small plastic bag in hand, Jaime White keeps her eyes peeled for any piece of litter that may come her way.

On Monday, at Logan Shoals Vista Point, she demonstrated just how easy it is to spot debris off the beaten path. In plain sight, she finds bottles, cans, papers and plastics. At least once a day, this third generation Tahoe resident will walk up and down trails and beaches searching for trash and she does it all in her spare time, even considering it to be fun.

[Read the whole story](#)