



# BURNING ISSUES

WWW.TAHOEFIRE.COM

WINTER 2010

## 2010 Fire Season

### Mark Novak, Fire Marshal

The Lake Tahoe Basin closed the 2010 Fire Season with the wettest October on record, and for many of you the threat of catastrophic wildfires has become a distant memory. However, at the Fire District, we remain vigilant about the threat of wildfire. Planning and implementing projects to protect your neighborhood from this threat is a year-round task. As we enter the end of this field season and begin the planning for next, we'd like to share the accomplishments of our Fuels Management Program:



<input type="checkbox"/> Compost Your Combustibles	91,254 lbs.
<input type="checkbox"/> Curbside Chipping	24,000 lbs.
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Roof Replacement Incentive Projects	9
<input type="checkbox"/> Defensible Space Evaluations	374
<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Removal Permits	180
<input type="checkbox"/> Fuel Break Projects	200 acres

Although much of this work was funded in part by grants through the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act and the United States Forest Service, this program of work would not have been successful without the citizen support through the Fire Safe Community Fund. This fund provides the baseline dollars necessary for the Fuels Management Program and provides the "matching funds" required to secure grants. We thank you for your continued support.

During the winter months you may periodically see prescribed fire activity in your neighborhood. We understand that this activity can be disruptive at times. All prescribed fires conducted by the Fire District's Zephyr Fire Crew are implemented under a detailed burn plan that includes specific parameters that provide for fire control and smoke dispersion. If you are smoke sensitive and would like to be notified prior to our prescribed fire activities please call 775-588-3591 to be placed on a notification list. Please be aware that State and Federal agencies may also be conducting burn activities.

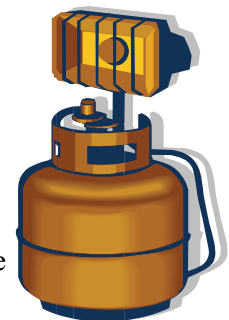
Continued on P3

Power Outages are a frequent occurrence in Lake Tahoe, be prepared with the following:

## Power outages

### In your house

- Never use kerosene or propane heaters inside without proper ventilation. They create dangerous fumes. Also, do not burn charcoal in your house or garage.
- Protect your water pipes during freezing weather by wrapping them in insulation. Also, leave faucets dripping so water won't freeze and crack the pipes.
- Your freezer should keep food frozen and safe for two days when kept closed.
- If someone in your home requires electrically powered medical treatments, make sure you have a back up system and a plan of action during an outage.



Continued on P4

## EASY ACCESS TO FIRE PREVENTION INFORMATION

In order to serve our constituents in the most effective manner possible, the Fire District maintains two websites that we hope you will find useful:

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE DISTRICT



[www.zephyrfiresafe.org](http://www.zephyrfiresafe.org) Is our specialized Fire Prevention and Fuels Management website. This site was designed so that you are only one click away from important information and online request forms. Information and requests are available for Defensible Space Inspections and Chipping Services. You will also find the latest on prescribed fires. Links can take you to information on the Nevada Fire Safe Council and our local chapters, Douglas County's Reverse 9-1-1 and a special Kid's Zone that includes Smokey Bear's own website.

[www.tahoefire.com](http://www.tahoefire.com) Provides latest news about Fire District activities, including job opening announcements. You can also find information on our personnel, fire stations and equipment. Special Services, such as Hazardous Materials Response, Explosive Ordinance Disposal, Rope, Ice and Water Rescue are profiled. Also links can be found to past newsletters, Strategic Plans, and Board of Trustees meeting agendas and minutes.

We are always open to feedback on our service and website through the Contact Us tab on either site.

## HOLIDAY FIRE SAFETY



All of us at the Fire District would like to wish you and your family a joyous Holiday Season and a Happy New Year. For many of us, the Holidays would not be the same without traditional Christmas decorations. Unfortunately, Christmas decorations can also be the cause of home fires. By following a few safety guidelines, you can create a festive environment in a safe manner.

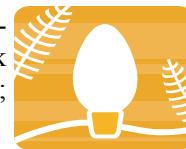


**Christmas Trees:** Christmas trees should be carefully selected. They should be green and free of brown needles. When you firmly grasp a branch the needles should bend, not break and should not easily detach from the branch. Immediately prior to placing the tree in a stand, the bottom ½" should be cut off. The tree should be placed in a substantial tree stand that will prevent it from tipping over and has a reservoir capable of holding 1-2 days worth of water. Maintain the water level at least 2" above the bottom of the tree. The Christmas tree should be placed away from heat sources such as fireplaces and heat vents, which can dry out the tree or ignite it. A good rule of thumb is to maintain a

distance equal to the height of the tree from heat sources

**Christmas Tree Disposal:** Do not dispose of a Christmas tree in a fireplace or woodstove. South Tahoe Refuse will pick up your Christmas tree on either of the two regular collection days following Christmas Day. Simply lay the tree at the curb with your garbage cans, if it is more than 6' - cut in half, and no tinsel or flocking please. Trees will be recycled.

**Holiday Lights:** Inspect lights each year for frayed wires, exposed wires, broken sockets and excessively kinked wires. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory (UL, FM etc.). Do not link more than three light strands unless the directions indicate it is safe to do so. Periodically check the wires; they should not be warm to the touch. Turn off lights when unattended and before retiring for the evening.



**Holiday Decorations:** All decorations should be nonflammable or flame retardant. Artificial trees should also be flame retardant. Do not block exterior doors or exit paths with trees or other decorations.

**Candles:** Candles are a major ignition source of home fires. If you do use candles, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot easily be knocked down. Never leave burning candles unattended. Candles should not be used to decorate Christmas trees or wreaths.

## WINTER 2010

### FIRE MARSHAL CONTINUED:

All of us at the Fire District would like to recognize the commitment of all local members of the Nevada Fire Safe Council. We are especially grateful for all of the dedicated Chapter Leaders who collectively volunteer hundreds of hours each season to make each neighborhood safer.

The Fuels Management Team is currently planning for the implementation of 200 acres of fuel break projects next season. We will also offer the Compost Your Combustible Program, Curbside Chipping, Defensible Space Evaluations, Tree Removal Permits and our unique Wood Roof Replacement Incentive. In addition, most every property in the Fire District will be eligible for grant assistance in completing defensible space work.

The time to begin your defensible space planning is now. Fire season typically arrives in the Tahoe Basin by early May. The Nevada State Fire Marshal is currently proposing the adoption of a Wildland Urban Interface Code, which would make compliance with defensible space standards mandatory.

Please visit us online for more information on our Fuels Management programs and services at [www.zephyrfiresafe.org](http://www.zephyrfiresafe.org) or call us at 775-588-3591.



### RESIDENTIAL FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEM UPDATE

Recent studies conducted for the National Fire Protection Association, have found that under some circumstances, antifreeze solutions found in fire sprinkler systems can ignite when discharged. These studies have found that specific circumstances must be present for this situation to occur. One factor that has been associated with this rare problem is high concentrations of antifreeze solutions. These studies also demonstrated that concentrations of glycerin not exceeding 50% and concentrations of glycol not exceeding 40% are effective in fire control tests.

In light of this information, the Fire District recommends you take the following actions:

- 1.** Do not drain, disconnect or otherwise disable your sprinkler system.
- 2.** If your home and sprinkler pipes are adequately insulated, and your home is maintained above 40° F, the use of water alone, may be possible. Consult your sprinkler contractor to determine the viability of this option.
- 3.** Have your sprinkler contractor check the antifreeze concentration within your sprinkler system. Your system may need to be drained and refilled with a factory pre-mixed antifreeze solution (only glycerin solutions should be used with plastic sprinkler pipe) to obtain the correct concentration.
- 4.** Have your sprinkler system serviced annually by a licensed sprinkler company. An annual service is essential to provide reliable operation of your sprinkler system.

Fire sprinkler systems, remain the most effective way to prevent death and injury in a home fire. A house fire occurs every 79 seconds in the U.S. and there is a residential fire death every 200 minutes (USFA). A properly functioning fire sprinkler system reduces the risk of dying in a residential fire by 83% (NFPA).

BOXHOLDER

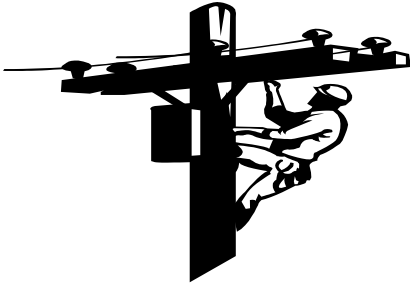


PERMITTED STANDARD  
PRESORTED  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
ZEPHYR COVE, NV  
89448  
PERMIT NO. 2

Don't forget, we're on the Internet at:  
[www.tahoefire.com](http://www.tahoefire.com)

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION  
DISTRICT  
P.O. Box 919  
Zephyr Cove, NV 89448  
Phone: 775-588-3591

## POWER OUTAGE SAFETY CONTINUED:



### Downed power lines

- Call 911 immediately. Don't touch it!
  - Keep everyone, including pets, out of the area. You cannot look at a downed line and determine if it's "live".
  - Do not touch a person who has a power line touching them. Call 911.
- If a power line falls across your vehicle, stay in the car and wait for emergency personnel to cut the power off. If your vehicle is on fire and you are in imminent danger and you must get out of the car, jump—with both feet together—as far from the car as possible. If a part of your body touches the car and the ground at the same time, you could be electrocuted.

### Generator safety

- Never plug your generator into an outlet and don't connect a generator directly to your home's main fuse box or circuit panel. The generator must be connected through an approved transfer switch that will isolate your house from the power company system. The switch must comply with codes which includes permits, inspection and installation by a licensed electrician.
- To temporarily power an appliance, plug it directly into the generator.
- Always properly ventilate a portable generator. Gasoline-powered generators produce carbon monoxide and the fumes can be deadly.





