



Town of Mammoth Lakes

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Town News

Town e-News – Week of December 24, 2012

News from the Town Manager

Happy Holidays from Mammoth Lakes Mayor, Matthew Lehman

"It's that time of year again, when we think of sitting by a warm mountain fire watching the snowflakes flurry outside a cold winter window. This year, mother nature has been particularly good to Mammoth Lakes. Given all the snow we have and all that is on its way, this season should be picturesque. As we enjoy this holiday season with friends and family, let's be thankful for all that we have. On behalf of all of Mammoth Lakes, I'd like to wish everyone a joyous holiday and a very happy New Year!"

Please note: Town Offices will be closed from noon on Monday, December 24, 2012, and on Tuesday, December 25, 2012 in celebration of Christmas. Happy Holidays!

Town Council Meeting – Jan. 2

The first meeting of the Mammoth Lakes Town Council for 2013 will be held on Wednesday, January 2, 2013 beginning at 6:00 p.m. Visit the [Streaming Media Archive](#) to review the previous meeting minutes or view the webcast Town Council meeting.

Joint News Release: Mammoth Unified School District And Mammoth Lakes Police Department

Like all of you, we are shocked and saddened by the horrific school shootings that occurred in Newtown, Connecticut on Friday and the tragic loss of life. One cannot begin to wonder what goes through a person's mind that pushes them to the edge to take such violent action on innocent people and in this case, teachers and kindergarten students. We share in the grief that all our community has for the victims, their families, and the people of Newton.

This gives us pause and time to reflect on our need to review our own school safety practices. Mammoth is a small close knit community with open campuses in which we could never fathom an incident similar to this occurring in our own small town. And yet, the same could be said about Newton, CT before Friday. Preliminary reports indicate that the school sophisticated security and the coordinated response from the first responders was rapid.

This tells us that we all must remain vigilant for the signs of any troubled youth that live in our community. Our teachers, administrators and school staff pride themselves on building strong working relationships with our students. We know all of our students by name. When there are signs of distress in a student's life we

have a number of steps that we can take to provide additional support to that student and their family.

The officers of the Mammoth Lakes Police Department also know many of the students and their families. They are a resource, not only for the schools, but also for families dealing with troubled youth or simply problems associated with raising children in these times.

Over this weekend the principals, local law enforcement and mental health services will continue to discuss the events that occurred this past Friday and be prepared to offer counseling services to our students and their families as we return to school on Monday morning. Law enforcement and the schools will be revisiting their school security and response plans in the coming days.

The Mono County Mental Health team is available to provide support for students and families and can be reached at (760) 924-1740.

Let's keep the families of the lost children and the teachers in our thoughts and prayers during the holiday season.

Rich Boccia
Superintendent of Schools
Mammoth Unified School District

Dan Watson
Chief of Police
Mammoth Lakes Police Department

Town Of Mammoth Lakes Announces An Upgrade To Its Bond Rating

The Town of Mammoth Lakes announced an upgrade to its bond rating by a leading rating agency, Standard & Poor's (S&P). An official announcement from S&P is attached and available on the Town's website.

A bond rating, similar to a credit score for an individual, determines whether a municipality is able to get financing, and at what interest rate. The Town's bond rating was downgraded by S&P to "C" in July 2012, when the Town declared bankruptcy. It was only "BB" with a "developing" outlook in 2009.

Getting its bond rating upgraded to "BB+" with a "stable" outlook is a major accomplishment of the Town, and reflects the recent successful efforts of its elected and appointed leaders to: 1) reach a settlement with MLLA for \$29.5 million on a judgment of \$43 million; 2) as part of the settlement, securing a flat interest rate of 5.17% with a long-term payment at \$2 million annually; and 3) developing and swiftly implementing a restructuring plan to make the settlement payments.

The Standard & Poor's rating upgrade statement states: "We base the upgrade on our view of a recent negotiated settlement between the town and its largest creditor, Mammoth Lakes Land Acquisition (MLLA), as well as the town's successful November 2012 withdrawal of its petition for bankruptcy."

S&P further commends the Town for implementing the "five-year restructuring plan, which we believe if implemented could restore structural balance to the general fund in the next two years and eventually build general fund reserve levels to slightly higher levels."

The "BB+" rating with a "stable" outlook is better than what the Town had in 2009. However, it is not the best, and the Town will be working diligently in its efforts to convince the S&P, other rating agencies (Fitch and Moody's) and investors of its abilities to live within its means, and have financial discipline. In the next few

months to a couple of years, two factors will be crucial in improving the Town's rating and, therefore, its credit worthiness: 1) increasing our reserves and 2) not deviating from the approved budget reduction measures.

Let S&P's announcement underscore this point: "Should the town implement budget adjustments as planned to approach structural budgetary balance including the settlement payment, we could raise the rating in the next year. The town's failure to maintain adequate general fund reserves ... as it absorbs the additional settlement costs into the budget and manages potential fluctuations in general fund revenue could lead to a downgrade."

Shop with a Cop

On Saturday, December 15, 2012, law enforcement officers from Mono and Inyo Counties made Christmas for 26 families that little bit brighter. The Mammoth Lakes Police Officers Association organized the Second Annual "Shop with a Cop" event. The following law enforcement agencies participated in Shop with a Cop:

- Mammoth Lakes Police Department
- Bishop Police Department
- Mono County Sheriff's Department
- Inyo County Sheriff's Department
- Bishop Tribal Police
- United States Forest Service Law Enforcement
- California Department of Fish and Game
- Inyo County Probation

Funds were raised from the communities and children from disadvantaged families were identified through community sources. Each child was picked up at home by their "officer" and driven in a police car to Whiskey Creek in Bishop for breakfast. After breakfast, everyone traveled by police car with lights flashing and sirens blaring to K-Mart where the shopping began. The law enforcement agencies provided \$200 to each child and K-Mart generously donated another \$50 in gift cards. With an officer pushing the shopping cart, the children excitedly shopped for each of their family members. Some of them had to be reminded to make sure they got something for themselves. After going through the checkstand, more volunteers wrapped each of the gifts while the children got to visit with Santa. The wrapping paper and bows were courtesy of K-Mart. Each child was then driven home by their officer where the gifts were distributed to the family or placed under a tree.

Everyone who participated in Shop with a Cop, including the officers, volunteer wrappers, staff from Whiskey Creek and K-Mart, and many observers, benefited by capturing the spirit of Christmas. Many shoppers who asked what was occurring were touched by this special event and offered to support the cause.

Special thanks go to Whiskey Creek in Bishop for providing a wonderful breakfast and to K-Mart for their generous contributions.

Mammoth Lakes Police Recruitment for Police Officers

As a result of several actual and anticipated police officer vacancies, the Mammoth Lakes Police Department (MLPD) is initiating a recruitment drive for police officers. Existing P.O.S.T. certified officers (lateral) are encouraged to apply. Applications will also be accepted from entry level police officer candidates.

This is an opportunity for a challenging career in law enforcement in one of the most beautiful environments in the United States.

Anyone interested in being part of the future of the MLPD can obtain more information by contacting the Police Department Recruiter, Sergeant Marc Moscowitz, at (760) 934-2011 ext. 68.

Calls For Service/Officer Observations

113, including 0 business/building checks

Crime/Incident Reports

21 reports, including 7 arrests

Traffic Stops/Citations/Traffic Collisions

8 stops; 3 citations; 12 parking citations; 0 skate park citations; 2 collisions

Animal Control Incidents

1 incident; 0 reports

Wildlife

9 calls; 0 reports

Projected Average Resort Occupancy

Friday, December 21, 2012 - Saturday, December 22, 2012 = 66%

(64% same weekend in 2011, up 2% in 2012)

Sunday, December 23, 2012 - Thursday, December 27, 2012 = 72%

(84% same midweek in 2011, down 12% in 2012)

Hotels/Motels/B&B: 80% (Friday-Saturday) 74% (Sunday-Thursday)

Condos: 53% (Friday-Saturday) 70% (Sunday-Thursday)

These projected numbers below are to help give you an idea of occupancy in town for New Year's week and weekend.

Friday, December 28, 2012 - Monday, December 31, 2012 = 94%

(87% same weekend in 2011, up 7% in 2012)

Tuesday, January 1, 2013 - Thursday, January 6, 2013 = 74%

(56% same midweek in 2012, up 18% in 2013)

Hotels/Motels/B&B: 93% (Friday-Monday) 71% (Tuesday-Thursday)

Condos: 95% (Friday-Monday) 77% (Tuesday-Thursday)

*These numbers will change when I take next week's numbers again.

Follow 'TownofMammoth' daily on Twitter at www.ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us.

Community News

Ford Presents the Night of Lights!

The spectacular Night of Lights began almost two decades ago celebrating the magic of the holiday season with a winter lights show against the majestic backdrop of Mammoth's ski slopes. Guests of all ages are invited to ride the complimentary Village Gondola to Canyon Lodge to enjoy a fun-filled night complete with a firework show, torchlight parade and more! The Night of Lights is a FREE event. Participate in some of the fun family activities on the 3rd floor including face painting or a magic show (at 4pm) or head outside and enjoy the sledding hill, the Unbound Playground Mini Hike Park, snowmobile rides and more.

Parking is limited. Please utilize the park and ride locations at both Eagle Lodge and Mammoth High School. The special event shuttle service will run from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The Village Gondola will also be running until 10:00 p.m.

Event Schedule:

3-6pm - Free concert by Big Wednesday in The Village

4-6:30pm - Free kid-friendly activities at Canyon Lodge

- Sledding Hill near Canyon Express (Chair 16)
- Snowmobile Rides near Schoolyard Express (Chair 17)
- Woolly's Igloo & Snow Play Area at Canyon Express (Chair 16)
- Face Painting and Caricature Artists in Canyon Lodge, 3rd Floor
- Magic Show in Canyon Lodge, 3rd Floor (at 4pm)
- Roaming entertainers

5pm-8pm - Rooftop Viewing Area and Family Club Room opens

5:15pm - Live music by Tommy Rocker

6:45pm - Night of Lights featuring a torchlight, laser and fireworks show

7:20pm - Live music by Tommy Rocker

7:30-8:30pm - Live music by Big Wednesday and roaming entertainers in The Village at Mammoth

10pm - Last Gondola to The Village

Dickens Christmas Carol Ends Dec. 23

A different take on a classic, a play within a play featuring hilarious, belly laughing fun. Shows are Thursday-Sunday at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday at 4:00 p.m. Please call (760) 934-6592 for reservations. Tickets are \$20 general admission or \$18 for students & seniors. Edison Theatre is located at 100 College Parkway.

Mammoth Moves

There will be no Mammoth Moves on December 26th, but we will restart on January 2nd with our winter series! Please join Brian Knox, Founder and President of Mammoth Nordic, at 12:10pm at the Mammoth Lakes Visitor Center trailhead. Bring your snowshoe set-up if available, otherwise wear waterproof boots and snowshoes will be provided.

Also, a big thank you to Kathy Copeland from Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra for hosting our holiday walk this past Wednesday! We cruised around town catching up with folks we saw along the way, and were all warmed up by the end of the walk despite being a chilly day. Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year to all. See you in 2013!

Forest Service Update on Status of June Mtn. Ski Area

With new snow on the ground and plenty more on the way, residents and visitors alike are looking forward to a variety of winter recreation opportunities available on the Inyo National Forest. At this time, the Forest Service would like to take the opportunity to clarify the current status of June Mountain Ski Area.

The Forest Service has received from Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA), a Draft Operation and Maintenance Plan for the 2012-2013 winter season at June Mountain. The plan details MMSA's proposal for how they would manage the permitted area and their facilities for this season. At this time the Forest Service has not yet accepted the Draft Plan. The plan is currently being reviewed and evaluated for its sufficiency by the Forest Service and legal counsel to the agency. The Forest Service has had several discussions with MMSA regarding questions and concerns with some elements of the plan. MMSA has agreed to make several changes that have been requested.

At this time, for public safety, the national forest land within the June Mountain Ski Area permit boundaries is closed to public access. According to District Ranger Jon Regelbrugge, "The Forest Service fully recognizes the public interest in accessing June Mountain and we are in the process of analyzing several complex safety issues related to limited avalanche control and other factors. Prior to accepting MMSA's Operation and Maintenance Plan, we believe public safety is best served by prohibiting access until a final determination is made regarding whether public safety can be appropriately managed given the situation."

Regelbrugge went on to add that the Forest Service is very close to issuing a temporary permit to the Double Eagle Resort for grooming of Nordic ski trails in the June Lake Loop. Also, depending on snow conditions, the Inyo National Forest over-snow-vehicle (snowmobile) trail system may be accessed from the June Lake Junction area. Grooming of the trail system started on Tuesday, December 18.

For more information about winter recreation opportunities on the Inyo National Forest please contact the Mammoth Welcome Center at 760-924-5500.

Recreation Highlights

Mammoth Ice Rink Now Open

Get Your Skates on Mammoth Lakes, the Mammoth Ice Rink is now OPEN. The Mammoth Ice Rink is an outdoor facility located at 416 Sierra Park Road adjacent to the new Mammoth Lakes Library offering public skating sessions, hockey clinics, pick-up hockey, Friday night lessons and is available for rental. We ask for your patience and consideration during efforts to re-open the facility after a winter storm.

Admission

Adults skate for \$10.00 with skate rentals, youth (5-15) for \$8.00 with skate rentals, and kids 4 and under skate free with a paid adult. This winter get your 6th Skate FREE with the Five Skate Pass (5SP), Seniors and college students skate mid-week for half-price, and local students skate for only \$2.00 per session (including skate rentals).

Friday Night Lessons

Ice skating group lessons are scheduled every Friday night at the Mammoth Ice Rink. Lessons are scheduled for 45 minutes for a cost of only \$10 per student with a maximum of 8 students per session. Friday night lesson times are 6:00 – 6:45 p.m. for Elementary age children, 7:00 – 7:45 p.m. for Middle/High School age skaters, and 8:00 – 8:45 p.m. for adults. Purchase five lessons in advance and get the 6th Lesson FREE! Ice skates are not included in the fee, but are available for rental. Private lessons are available for \$25/hour.

Ice Hockey

Pick-up Ice Hockey is programmed at the Mammoth Ice Rink for the entire season (includes holiday periods). Please refer to the schedule for details. Fees are \$10 for adults or \$5 for youth per session, or \$150/\$100 for an Adult or Youth Season Pass.

The Mammoth Ice Rink is owned and operated by the Town of Mammoth Lakes through a partnership with Mammoth Unified School District and Mono County Office of Education. The facility is drug-free, smoke-free and pet-free. We accept cash, credit cards, and personal checks with a valid driver's license. For the complete winter schedule, rates and special promotions visit www.mammothicerink.com, or call the Mammoth Ice Rink at (760) 934-2505 during winter operating hours.

We'll see you on the ice!

Gymnastics/Tumbling Program

NEW SCHEDULE: Beginning October 19, 2012, the Wednesday session will now take place on Friday. No class on October 26 – join us at the Halloween Party at the Mammoth Roller Rink!

This year-round program is designed to introduce children from 3-18 years old the wonderful and exciting sport of gymnastics. Offered by Michelle DeJong, a level 8 competitive gymnast and Level 1-5 gymnastics coach, participants will learn to tumble and more in a safe and structured environment. This program is also a recipient of Measure R funding with \$7,000 of gymnastic equipment. Three age programs are available:

- 3-5 yr. olds – Saturday: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

- 5-8 yr. olds – Saturday: 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.
- 8-12+ yr. olds – **Friday:** 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. & Saturday: 11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- 8-12+ yr. olds – Tuesday: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. – Invitation only.

Five session Punch Cards are available for \$60 for the first family member and \$55 for each additional family member. Private lessons are available upon request, please inquire with the instructor. Drop-ins cost \$15 per session are welcome and encouraged - First one is FREE! Please call (760) 934-8989 ext. 222 for more information or to register your aspiring Gymnast!

Zumba Fitness

Party yourself into shape with Zumba® Fitness offered by Kaysie Williams from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Mammoth Lakes Community Center, 1000 Forest Trail. Cost: 10 punch-\$77.50; 5 punch-\$42.50; Drop-In rate \$10 per class and your first class is only \$5!

Sports & Recreation Calendar

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|-----------|--|
| ▪ CLOSED | Reds Meadow, Tioga, Sonora and the Lakes Basin |
| ▪ Nov. 8 | Mammoth Mountain Opening Day! |
| ▪ Nov. 17 | Tamarack Cross Country Ski Center Opening Day |
| ▪ Dec. 14 | Mammoth Ice Rink Opening Day! |
| ▪ Dec. 20 | Snowmobile Adventures Opening Day |
| ▪ Dec. 21 | Woolly's Tube Park and Snow Play Opening Weekend |
| ▪ Dec. 22 | Mammoth Night of Lights |
| ▪ Dec. 27 | Kittredge Cup |

Public Service Announcements

Winter Parking Ordinance – Nov.1 – April 30

The Mammoth Lakes Police Department would like to remind residents, visitors, and business owners that parking is prohibited on Town streets between November 1 through April 30. Obstructing snow removal equipment is also prohibited.

The Police Department only enforces these sections when it is snowing, or after a storm while snow removal equipment is in operation. Motorists should be aware of weather forecasts and make sure their vehicles are off the street when snow removal equipment is operating or may be operating. Any accumulation of snow means the plows will be out and the snow removal is not complete until the snow blowers have removed berms created by the plows.

Vehicles should always be parked behind the snow stakes. Operating snow removal equipment is complicated and when there are heavy accumulations of snow, vehicles parked partially on the street side of the stakes cannot always be observed. A passenger vehicle struck by snow removal equipment can receive substantial damage and if the vehicle is parked on the street side of the stakes, the accident is the fault of the driver of the illegally parked vehicle.

Please help the Town of Mammoth Lakes in its snow removal operations by parking legally during Winter months.

Christmas Tree Cutting Permits Now Available

Christmas tree cutting permits are now available for \$5 per tree with a limit of one tree per household, from cutting areas on the Bridgeport District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and Bureau of Land Management lands. The Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest has once again opened the Bridgeport Ranger District for cutting and tree removal. Permits for that area are available at the Bridgeport Ranger Station, Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center and the White Mountain Ranger Station.

For the Bureau of Land Management lands there are tree cutting areas near Benton and Lyda, Nevada. Permits for these areas are available from the joint BLM/Forest Service Visitor Center (White Mountain Ranger Station) in Bishop and the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center.

- Bridgeport Ranger Station (760-932-7070) open Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 4:30
- Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center (760-647-3043) open Thursday-Monday, 9:00-4:30. Closing Sunday December 2, for the season.
- Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center (760-924-5500) open daily from 8:00 to 5:00
- White Mountain Ranger Station, 798 N. Main Street in Bishop (760-873-2500) open Monday-Friday, 8:30-4:30

Please note that all ranger stations and visitor centers will be closed on Thursday November 22 for the Thanksgiving holiday. Maps, directions to cutting areas, and regulations for cutting Christmas trees may be obtained at the issuing office or by calling the above-listed offices.

Winter Forest visitors are always advised to dress appropriately; bring along emergency items such as chains, snow tires, a shovel, first-aid kit, blankets, and extra food and water; and tell trusted parties their expected cutting location and departure and return times.

Mono County Public Health Update

A Wake – Up Call: Indicators Point to an Early, Bad Flu Season!

Significant increases in flu activity in the United States have occurred in the last 2 weeks, indicating that an early flu season is upon us. These increases overlap with National Influenza Vaccination Week being observed from Dec 2-8. This should be a wake-up call for anyone who has put off vaccination – the time is NOW!

According to local, regional, and national public health reports, all but 2 states have already reported laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza, and the percentage of tests turning positive is rising fast. Influenza activity in parts of the country is already higher than all of last season, with 5 states reporting the highest level of activity possible. These indicators are the highest for this time of year since the 2003-4 season, which was early and severe, especially for children. Last season,

which was mild and late, the US did not reach a peak until mid-March – a month later than the usual in February.

Flu activity is most intense in the south-central and southeast part of the country right now. However, it is showing signs of increasing across the country as well, including in California. Thus far, there have not been any documented cases in the Eastern Sierra. Certainly there has been a lot of illness in our midst this fall – just not the real influenza. The bad news – most of the viruses identified so far this season in the US have been Type A, which are typically associated with more severe seasons. The good news – most of the viruses are well matched to the viruses in this year's vaccine.

With increasing flu activity and family and friends gathering for the holidays, now is a great time to get a flu vaccine to protect yourself and your loved ones. Virtually everyone older than 6 months of age should be vaccinated. Getting an annual flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against influenza disease. This is especially important for those at highest risk of developing complications from the flu – and for those family and friends around them. This includes children under the age of 5 years, those adults over 65 years of age, pregnant women, and those with long-term medical problems, such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, neurological and neurodevelopmental problems, blood disorders, obesity, kidney and liver disease, HIV/AIDS, and cancer.

Since the vaccine takes 2 weeks to work, you have time – before the virus arrives in the Eastern Sierra, and before most holiday gatherings – to get yourself protected, and to protect your family. Vaccine is plentiful this year, and is available from your healthcare provider, pharmacies, and the Health Department. Getting vaccinated means you have taken a giant step in protecting yourself, your family and friends, and your community from what promises to be a bad flu season. Many are still unprotected – are you one of them? Now is the time to act!

Holiday Fire Safety Tips from the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District

Decorating homes and businesses is a basic part of the holiday season. Unfortunately, these same decorations may increase your chances of fire. An estimated 250 home fires involving Christmas trees and another 170 home fires involving holiday lights and other decorative lighting occur each year. Together, these fires resulted in 21 deaths and 43 injuries.

Following a few simple fire safety tips can keep electric lights, candles, and the ever popular Christmas tree from creating a tragedy. Learn how to prevent a fire and what to do in case a fire starts in your home. Make sure all exits are accessible and not blocked by decorations or trees. Help ensure that you have a fire safe holiday season.

Christmas Trees

What's a traditional Christmas morning scene without a beautifully decorated tree? If your household includes a natural cut tree in its festivities, make sure that you – "Keep the tree watered." Christmas trees account for hundreds of fires annually. Typically, shorts in electrical lights or open flames from candles, lighters or matches start tree fires. A dry and neglected tree can be a serious problem. Keep your tree well-watered and remove from the structure if many needles begin falling from the tree.

Selecting a Tree for the Holidays

Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needles should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree was cut too long ago, has dried out, and is a fire hazard and should be removed regardless of how long the tree has been in the structure.

Caring for Your Tree

Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Do not put your cut tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.

Disposing of Your Tree

Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood-burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or hauling it to the disposal center for proper treatment.

Holiday Lights

Maintain Your Holiday Lights

Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.

Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets

Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires – they should not be warm to the touch. **Do not leave holiday lights on unattended!**

Holiday Decorations

Use Only Nonflammable Decorations

All decorations should be nonflammable or flame-retardant and placed away from heat vents. If you are using a metallic or artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.

Don't Block Exits

Ensure that trees and other holiday decorations do not block an exit way. In the event of a fire, time is of the essence. A blocked entry/exit way puts you and your family at risk.

Never Put Wrapping Paper in the Fireplace

Wrapping paper in the fireplace can result in a very large fire, throwing off dangerous sparks and embers that may result in a chimney fire. Wrapping paper may also contain toxins that are not safe to breathe if allowed to burn.

The Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District wishes you a very happy and safe holiday season. For more information or for any questions pertaining to fire related issues, please feel free to contact the Mammoth Lakes Fire Department at (760) 934-2300.

Reds Meadow Area Open for Winter Use

Logging operations in the Reds Meadow Valley have been completed for removing down trees from the wind event of last November 30, 2012. Consequently, the area

closures in the Reds Meadow Valley will no longer be in effect. While the Reds Meadow Road is closed to wheeled motor vehicles for the season due to snow, access to Reds Meadow Valley will now be open to winter public use, including snowshoer, skier, snowmobile and pedestrian traffic.

Before travel into the Reds Meadow Valley, visitors should be aware of winter conditions and hazards in the area. The Reds Meadow Road is not maintained during winter, and may be subject to avalanche hazard. No services are available in Reds Meadow Valley during the winter. In case of need for emergency communication, public pay phones are located at the Reds Meadow Resort, Devils Postpile National Monument Ranger Station, and across from the Pumice Flat Group Campground.

For more information, please call the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center at (760) 924-5500 or visit the Welcome Center at 2510 Hwy 203 next to the Mammoth Ranger Station.

Help Keep Mammoth's Air Clean This Winter

When the Town of Mammoth Lakes experiences periods of clear, cold, and calm weather with minimal breeze, the air quality deteriorates. Wood smoke from fireplaces and stoves cannot dissipate, and sometimes builds up to unhealthy levels that could have serious health consequences. To keep our air as clean as possible, please do your part by following these simple steps:

- Only burn clean and hot fires
- Check your chimney periodically for emissions (if smoke is clearly visible, then your fire needs more air, the wood is not dry enough, or the wood is not split small enough)
- Call (760) 934-1010 for any wood burning restrictions
- Abide by the "no wood burning" days restrictions

The Town of Mammoth Lakes continually monitors air quality, and will announce "no wood burning" days when air quality is forecast to approach unhealthy levels. To find out if wood burning restrictions have been announced, please call (760) 934-1010, listen to local radio announcements, or sign up for air quality notifications via the Town's Notify Me feature at <http://www.ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us/list.aspx>.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Town And Partners Begin Construction On The Mammoth Gateway Community Project!

The Town and its partners have begun construction on the Mammoth Gateway Community Project, which is a citizen-initiated, public-private partnership, to construct a gateway entry on Main Street. The Project, which was spearheaded by local citizen Mrs. Elizabeth Tenney, involves a number of partners that have contributed many hours and resources, including Snowcreek (Chadmar), Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA), Mammoth Community Foundation (MCF), Mono County, Mammoth Community Water District (MCWD), the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), the United States Forest Service (USFS), and the Town of Mammoth Lakes, as well as a number of local citizens.

The Project, which was designed by local artist Larry Walker, (architectural services were provided by architect Bruce Woodward), is intended to reflect the unique environment, culture, and heritage of Mammoth Lakes, and serve as a welcome to visitors and residents. Construction is expected to be completed in mid-November.

For additional information below on the gateway project, please visit the dedicated webpage: http://mammothgateway.org/Construction_Updates.html.

Free, Real-Time Property Information Now Available!

The Town of Mammoth Lakes and Mono County are proud to present ParcelViewer, the Town and County's official web-based property information system. This free, public, on-line service can be relied upon to provide convenient, accurate and up-to-date information, based on the official Assessor's data-base. Use ParcelViewer to view and print customized parcel information and maps, including:

- Zoning Information
- Property Addresses
- Complex Names/ Condo Unit Numbers
- Parcel Lines*
- Valuation Data
- Acreage
- Aerial imagery of surrounding properties and more!

Visit Parcel Viewer today at <http://gis.mono.ca.gov/parcelviewer/>

California Mandates Recycling for Business and Multi-Family Residential Locations

A new State of California Bill (AB 341) directed by CalRecycle mandating commercial recycling in California goes into effect July 1, 2012. The Town of Mammoth Lakes will be providing education and outreach to help the community comply with the new regulations.

The goal of AB 341 is to increase the statewide recycling rates to 75% by 2020. Starting July 1 2012, businesses and public entities that generate four cubic yards or more of waste per week, including multi-family units of five or more will be required to recycle. The purpose of this new law is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by diverting commercial solid waste to recycling efforts while expanding opportunities for additional recycling services and recycling manufacturing facilities in California.

Please use the following link for additional information provided by CalRecycle that addresses the "Frequently Asked Questions:" <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/climate/Recycling/FAQ.htm>.

The Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML), Sierra Conservation Project (SCP) and Mammoth Disposal (MD) are taking active steps to assist businesses and multi-family residences to comply with the new regulations.

Brian Robinette, owner of Sierra Conservation Project commented, "This is a big step in the right direction for recycling and diverting recyclables from our local landfills. The new regulation will give the extra incentive needed to make recycling programs a reality at all Mammoth Lakes business and residential locations."

The TOML, SCP and MD have been working together for several years to develop and grow recycling programs here in the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

Johnny Goetz, Town of Mammoth Lakes Senior Building Inspector states, "Now is a great time for local businesses to take advantage of the numerous recycling opportunities we have available in Town. Condominium complexes can also take advantage of the TOML and SCP's recycling programs which are currently providing start-up infrastructure to the complex at no cost - while supplies last."

The TOML and SCP have applied for additional grant money to continue to offset the start-up cost for multi-family and businesses here in town. Bear proof recycling containers are provided to participating condo complexes, and are serviced by SCP.

Pat Fenton, General Manager of Mammoth Disposal added, "Recycling is at the core of the company's goal of sustainability, and it's the core of our commitment to business owners and the Town of Mammoth Lakes to meet this mandate."

The following recycling programs are currently available within the Town of Mammoth Lakes:

- Commercial cardboard recycling
- Restaurant and bar programs
- Lodging and hospitality programs
- Business recycling
- Office recycling
- Residential recycling
- Aluminum, plastic, and glass
- E-Waste
- Used oil and batteries

Some of the benefits of recycling identified by CalRecycle are creating jobs in California, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, keeping valuable materials out of landfills, and creating a healthy environment for the community and future generations by recovering natural resources.

For more information regarding recycling programs and opportunities within the Town of Mammoth Lakes, contact Johnny Goetz at (760) 934-8989 ext. 244 or jgoetz@ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us.

Town & MLFD Identify Potential Safety Issue

The Town of Mammoth Lakes Community Development Department (Town) and Mammoth Lakes Fire Department (Fire District) have identified an issue with inserted wood burning fireplace installations in town. If you have either a pellet/gas insert installation or a masonry flue/chase, these types of appliances or installations are not an issue. The issue is that wood burning inserts placed into zero clearance fireplace boxes (fireplace) with factory built metal flue pipes and wooden chases may not have adequate clearance to combustible materials (wood, plywood, and/or sheetrock behind the rock, brick, metal and/or wooden material that doesn't allow you to see on the interior surface of the fireplace façade). This issue can exist in all types of residential occupancies, from single family to multi-family projects. As a result of the clearances that may not have been met, combustible materials are igniting and several fires have resulted around town. Thus far there have been no injuries, but both the Town and Fire District feel that we cannot wait until something tragic occurs before we take necessary action. At this point both agencies are hoping to educate the town population to the concern.

The original fireplace contained fires that never obtained very high burning temperatures, due to the amount of heat that went up the flue. Once the insert was installed, the appliance burned much more efficiently causing the combustibles surrounding the original installation to be exposed to significantly greater heat levels. Another factor is the amount of use the insert is experiencing. The issue is occurring throughout town; no certain complex, no certain installer, no certain type of product, nor any other common characteristic that allows the agencies to narrow down the

likely installations of concern. One complex in town had 23 of 60 units show some sign of heat damage to combustibles.

Permitted installations during the last 18 to 24 months that followed the manufacturer's installation instructions have been installed correctly. The Town and Fire District do not mean to alarm anyone, but strongly believe that this situation is serious enough to inform the public on the use and installation of these types of wood burning installations. If you need any further assistance or have any questions, please contact the Fire District at (760) 934-2300 or Town at (760) 934-8989, ex 244. For more information: <http://mammothlakesfd.intuitwebsites.com>

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) Frequently Asked Questions

Some of the most frequently asked questions about legal rentals and Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) are:

1. What is a transient rental?

A transient rental is any unit that is occupied for the purpose of sleeping, lodging, or similar reasons for a period of 30 consecutive days or less in exchange for a fee or similar consideration.

2. Can I rent my unit as a transient rental?

Only some zones within the Town of Mammoth Lakes permit transient rentals. The following zones permit transient rentals:

- RMF-2 (Residential Multi-family 2)
- CL (Commercial Lodging)
- CG Commercial General)
- R (Resort, including master plan areas)
- SP (Specific Plan, including North Village and Clearwater)

This list is intended as a guide only. Although the above zones permit transient use generally, other regulations, such as those found in master plans, CC&Rs, or project conditions of approval may prohibit transient rental within a particular development. Generally, transient rental of single family homes is prohibited. A zoning map can be found on the Town's website.

3. What is transient occupancy tax (TOT)?

Transient occupancy tax, or TOT, is a 13% tax that is charged "for the privilege of occupancy of any transient occupancy facility." The tax is required to be paid to the operator of the transient occupancy facility at the time the rent is paid. It is the operator's responsibility to remit the TOT to the Town.

4. Do I need to pay TOT?

If you are renting your unit as a transient rental, even if it is only for one weekend a year, you need to pay TOT. This includes single family homes and other units that are not permitted to rent nightly, but may be doing so illegally. TOT shall be remitted for each night the unit is rented.

5. Do I need a business tax certificate?

Yes, if you are renting your unit on a transient basis.

6. Do I need a transient occupancy tax certificate?

Yes. You are required to purchase a transient occupancy certificate for each rental unit to post in your transient rental property. This is included as part of Schedule E or F in the business tax certificate application.

7. What is the difference between a business tax certificate and a transient occupancy tax certificate?

Business tax is an annual tax and is required for all business activity. The transient occupancy tax certificate is a one-time purchase that is non-transferable. This certificate is required to be posted in your transient rental unit.

8. Do I need a business tax certificate if all of my rentals are handled through a reservation company?

If all of your rentals are handled through a reservation company, most reservation companies will purchase the transient occupancy tax certificate and collect and remit the TOT to the Town. You may wish to check with your reservation company to confirm that this is being taken care of. If you rent your unit by owner in addition to renting with a property management company, you are also required to obtain a separate business tax certificate and transient occupancy tax certificate.

9. How do I apply for a business tax certificate?

The Town's website contains information regarding business tax certificates, including an application for a business tax certificate: <http://www.ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=182>. Transient Rentals fall under schedule F for condominium rentals and schedule E for hotels, motels, lodges, and campgrounds. This application can be mailed back to the Town, or submitted in person. The total cost for one unit is \$118.00 (\$65.00 application fee, \$5.00 planning review fee, \$25.00 fee to rent one unit, \$23.00 TOT certificate fee). Additional costs apply for additional units. Business tax certificates are required on or before the first day business commences; penalties will apply for late filings. If you have additional questions regarding this process please contact the Finance Department at (760) 934-8989 x245.

10. Do I have a business tax certificate?

To find out if you have a valid business tax certificate on file, please contact the Finance Department at (760) 934-8989 x245 or your property management company.

11. What is illegal rental activity?

Illegal rental activity is any rental activity that is not consistent with the Town's Zoning Ordinance, or any rental activity that is not compliant with the Transient Occupancy Tax Ordinance. This can include transient rental of units located in zones that prohibit transient rentals. It can also include transient rentals in a zone where it is permitted, but when the TOT is not remitted to the Town.

12. How can I report illegal rental activity?

If you suspect illegal rental activity, you may submit an anonymous tip via the Town's TOT hotline at (760) 934-8989 x275 or on the Town's website via the Transient Occupancy Tax information page. Please include any information that you have that would substantiate the claim, along with the property address and owner's name if you have it. You may also email tot@ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us. Note that emails are not anonymous, however, staff will do its best to keep your information private.

13. Questions & Anonymous TOT Hotline

If you have questions about TOT enforcement, or if you would like to report suspicious activity or rental advertisements please contact our anonymous hotline. The Town will follow-up on any reports submitted. The Hot Line Number is (760) 934-8989 ext. 275 or email your information to: TOT@ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us.

Register for CodeRED

Residents of Mono County can register their cell phones to receive emergency CodeRED (reverse 911) alerts from Mono County. This is a county public service available to all Mono County residents so please tell your friends and neighbors in Mono County that they can register for this service. CodeRED announcements are for personal notification and will not replace CERT CAHAN notification. Here is how to sign register/sign up using the INTERNET:

1. Go to monosheriff.org
2. scroll down left side panel to CodeRED community notification system;
3. click on it and follow directions.

Leash Law Reminder

Mammoth residents and visitors are reminded that the Town has a leash law, and it is a violation of the ordinance to allow your dog to run loose off of your property. While budget cuts eliminated the Animal Control Officer position, the laws pertaining to controlling your pets did not change, and you can still be cited by Mammoth Lakes Police Department officers if your dog is at large. The PD is currently receiving a large number of complaints from several neighborhoods, and will be targeting patrol time in those areas when possible to apprehend loose dogs and to cite their owners. In addition to the citation fine, you could also be charged boarding fees by Mono County Animal Control if we choose to impound your dog at the Whitmore Shelter.

At-large dogs are a traffic hazard, and even the most well behaved dog can bite if provoked. If your loose animal causes a traffic collision or injures/bites someone, you would likely be liable for damages, which could add up to thousands of dollars. Please respect your neighbors, AND your pet and obey the leash law.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors Save Lives

The Town of Mammoth Lakes has launched a community outreach effort to inform community residents that on July 1, 2011 many homes will be required to install carbon monoxide detectors.

The Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that carbon monoxide kills approximately 500 people each year and injures another 20,000 people nationwide. In an effort to prevent these accidental deaths and injuries, the

California legislature enacted SB 183 (Lowenthal) which mandates owners of dwelling intended for human occupancy to install carbon monoxide devices in existing dwelling units having a fossil fuel burning heater or appliance, fireplace, or attached garage.

CO devices must be installed in all specified single-family dwellings by July 1, 2011. All other specified dwelling units must have CO devices installed by January 1, 2013.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (SFM) has developed a list of certified CO devices that meet the requirement specified within the Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act of 2010.

For a complete list of currently approved devices please visit the SFM's website at http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/licensinglistings/licenseslisting_bml_searchcotest.php. Under the search categories provided select Carbon Monoxide Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Detectors for a complete list of devices.

Further details contained within the Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act of 2010:

- Owners shall install CO devices in a manner consistent with building standards applicable to new construction for the relevant type of occupancy if it is technically feasible. See the 2010 California Building Code, Section 420.4, and the 2010 California Residential Code, Section R315.
- CO devices shall produce a distinct audible alarm.
- CO devices may be combined with a smoke detector, if the combination device meets all specified SFM listing and approval requirements.
- Violation of Health & Safety Code Section 17926 is an infraction punishable by a maximum fine of two-hundred dollars for each offense.
- A local enforcement agency shall provide the property owner a 30-day notice to correct.
- Local jurisdictions are authorized to adopt ordinances requiring CO devices if the ordinance is consistent with the requirement of this bill.

For a full list of this legislation's stipulations please review the Department of Housing and Community Development's Information Bulletin 2011-01 at <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/codes/shl/infobulls/IB2011-01.pdf>.

Town Outdoor Lighting Ordinance

In 2003, the Town implemented an outdoor lighting ordinance to eliminate light pollution and preserve views of our starry skies. The outdoor lighting ordinance was adopted to encourage residents to administer a lighting system that not only promotes public safety and night-time ambiance but to maximize energy conservation. To eliminate glare and light trespass into neighboring properties and roadways, the outdoor lighting fixtures on your property should be shielded and re-directed to shine downward or changed out to a lower wattage. More information about responsible lighting can be found at www.crlaction.org.