

Fire Destroys Home in Kirkwood

On March 25th, there was a major structure fire in Kirkwood. Thankfully no injuries resulted, but a home was completely destroyed. A big THANK YOU to the Kirkwood Volunteer Fire Department, Eastern Alpine Volunteer Fire Department and District staff who responded within minutes to the scene to put out flames and protect the public. While the cause of the incident is still under investigation, there was propane service to the home that contributed to the fire. This incident serves as an important reminder to maintain the area around exterior propane meters, piping and regulators. This is extremely important for two reasons:

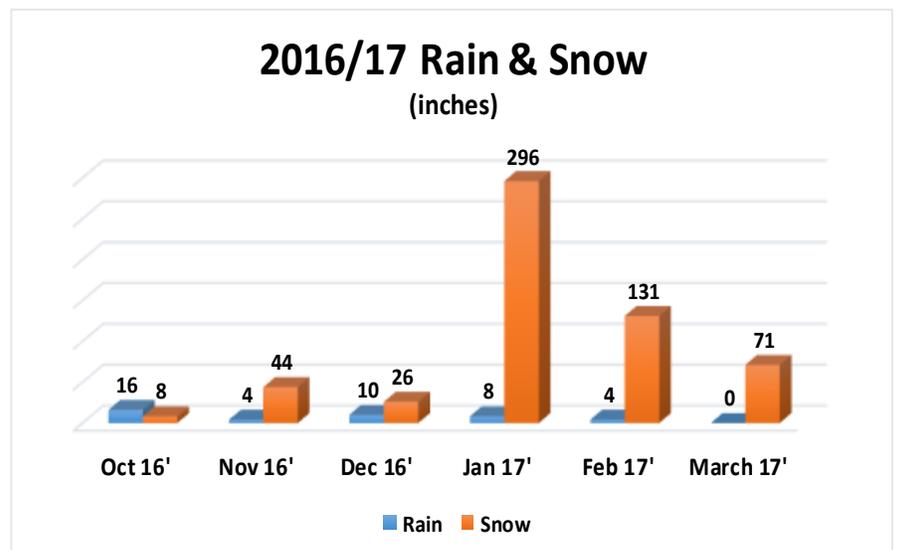


First as a preventative measure. Snow and ice buildup on propane equipment can cause damage that may lead to equipment malfunction or propane leaks. Special attention should be paid to protective structures surrounding gas equipment – snow should be cleared from roofs, decks, or snow sheds above gas equipment to ensure that they do not collapse causing damage. Second as emergency access. Access to the propane service valve, located near your meter is essential in an emergency situation such as a fire. If the service valve is not accessible, propane gas can continue to flow, providing additional fuel to the fire and increasing damages. The District encourages you to check the status of your propane meter immediately and ensure that it is accessible and protected. District staff is conducting a propane patrol to check the status of all propane meters. We will be contacting you if we feel attention is needed for safety or accessibility reasons.

Winter 2016/17 Precipitation

The 2016/17 winter season will be remembered for several huge snow storms but the Sierra also received a fair amount of rain. The ski resorts are sitting at an average of 143% of average snowfall on the upper mountains, around 8,000 feet in elevation. At the end of the 2010/11 season, the most recent big snow season, resorts were at 166% of average snowfall. The month of January set records for snowfall, but to break a total season record the Sierra would need about 300 more inches of snow. Although this winter season is not setting records for snowfall, total precipitation is exceeding the 1982/83 winter, the wettest winter on record.

As many of you may recall, Kirkwood has received several inches of rain throughout this winter season, resulting in flooding and stress on District infrastructure. The graph at right shows a monthly snow and rain comparison for Kirkwood for the 2016/17 winter season (measurements taken at the Community Service Building).



Caples Ecological Restoration Project – Controlled Burn

The US Forest Service is moving forward with preparations for a planned prescribed burn this summer and fall within the Caples Creek watershed, located just north of the Kirkwood area. The area lies within Amador, Alpine and El Dorado counties and is the primary water supply for numerous people and businesses that are served by the El Dorado Irrigation District. Because the Caples Creek watershed has not experienced any active fire since 1916, the Forest service is concerned with the significant increases in fuel loading, tree density, canopy cover and snag density along with shifts' in species composition and the reduced regeneration particularly of desirable deciduous and hardwood trees and reduced shrub cover. The Forest Service is planning to "re-introduce fire as an ecological process through prescribed burning approximately 8,800 acres of the Caplets Creek watershed using manual and aerial ignition methods." This project will take approximately 10 years to complete, with up to 1,000 acres per year treated.

Given the past drought conditions, the District is concerned about the use of prescribed fire in proximity to Kirkwood along with the impact of smoke and access to recreation areas within the project. Because of these reasons, the District has sent a Consideration of Scoping Comment letter to the Forest Service identifying these concerns. The response received from the Forest Service stated that they would perform prescribed burning under specific fuel and weather conditions and will follow Best Available Control Measures with regards to smoke emissions. The Project implementation begins in the summer of 2017 with numerous activities such as perimeter line construction, hand cutting and piling of vegetation in preparation of prescribed burning along with meadow and aspen restoration treatments. For more information and to see a map of this project follow this link:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=46514>

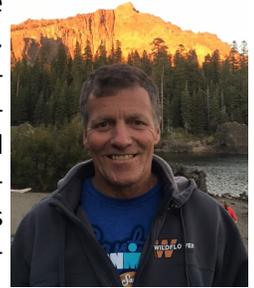
You can also contact Jennifer Ebert, with the Placerville Ranger District Environmental Coordinator, El Dorado National Forrest at (530) 642-5187.

** Reminder **

Kirkwood Mountain Resort scheduled last day of lift operations for the 2016/17 ski season is Sunday April, 16. Uphill hiking for mountain access will be allowed this spring after the resort closes. Contact Kirkwood Mountain Resort for more details.

General Manager Announces Retirement

On Saturday March 11, 2017, the General Manager of the Kirkwood Meadows PUD, Michael Sharp, gave his six month notice to retire to be able to devote more time to his family and friends. Please join District staff and the Kirkwood Community in congratulating Michael on his upcoming retirement and thanking him for over 20 years of devoted service to the District. The Board is actively advertising and accepting applications to fill this important position.



Save the Date for Kirkwood Summer Events

Mark your calendar! Come enjoy summer at Kirkwood.

Kirkwood Summer Festival: Saturday July 1, 2017 in the Village Plaza from 3:00–6:00 pm. This event features live music, wine & beer tasting, great food, a kid's area, a silent auction and is a benefit for the Kirkwood Volunteer Fire Department.

37th Annual 5K/10K & Kid's Run:

This fun event has been taking place in Kirkwood each Labor Day weekend for the past 36 years and is planned for Saturday, September 2nd, this year. Presented by the Kirkwood Volunteer Fire Department with net proceeds from the event to benefit the Kirkwood Volunteer Fire Department.

15th Annual Thin Air Chili Cook-Off:

Also on Saturday, September 2nd, is the 16th Annual Thin Air Chili Cook-Off. This event includes wine, beer and chili tasting for adults, live music, and a craft area plus fun activities for the kids. Sample some of the region's best chili! Proceeds from this event also benefit the Kirkwood Volunteer Fire Department.

We're looking forward to seeing you all this summer! More information to come on all of these events.



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