

You would be hard-pressed to find a Tahoe local who does not feel extremely lucky to call this area home. With a multitude of outdoor activities to choose from whatever the season, fresh air, low crime rates, world-class restaurants, proximity to Reno and Sacramento, neighborhoods full of smiling friends and vacationers who have saved for years just to enjoy our backyard for a week or two; we understand the privilege we are afforded. This privilege is not without its price. And, while we here at Tahoe City Public Utility District know it's worth it, we would be remiss if we did not mention to any prospective Tahoe-ite just what it means to make the move.

Snow, snow and more snow. That's what Tahoe is all about. It drives our locals, it drives our economy, and yes, sometimes it drives us crazy. From driving in it, to shoveling it, to dealing with a contractor to remove it on our behalf; one should *never* underestimate what it means to live in snow country. A reliable all wheel or four wheel drive vehicle with better than average clearance and snow tires is a must. Another staple piece of equipment, for most, is a snow thrower. While a relationship with one of the many snow removal contractors in the area will make life easier by far, there are times when you will be glad you have this piece of machinery.

How much is a gallon of gas? Yes, goods and services are more expensive here. From gasoline to shoes to carpentry, you will pay more for some things here than you might in major urban areas. While Reno is a fair alternative we, as a community, do try to purchase locally whenever we can as a means to bolster the local economy. After all, these local small-business owners are our neighbors, taxpayers, and ratepayers!

Be Bear Aware. And conservation aware and fire aware and... We understand we have moved to a one-of-a kind-Lake, "The fairest picture the whole earth affords" if you believe Mark Twain (we do). And, we take our role as Lake Tahoe stewards very seriously. This means keeping our bears safe by keeping our food and trash out of their reach. It means planting drought tolerant plants to minimize watering and run-off. It means experiencing dangerously high blood pressure when we see someone flick a cigarette out a car window and flinching every time we hear a neighborhood firecracker sound on July Fourth. It means picking up someone else's trash on the trail. It means taking nothing but pictures and leaving nothing but footprints. Mostly it means that every time we do one or all of the above, we experience a swelling of pride knowing we are in balance with nature, knowing we are giving as much as we get back.

My kingdom for a house! Some call it the Tahoe bubble. It's a protective layer around our housing market that keeps our home prices high, even in down economies. We won't sugar coat: you will pay more for less house on less land. Surrounding areas like Truckee, Glenshire and Tahoe Donner still offer a bit more for the dollar. The good news is rental prices have come down somewhat and will give you all the time you need to save for and find that perfect mortgage opportunity.

It's only a fifteen minute drive, I'll be there in an hour. Tahoe has two seasons: winter and road construction. While this is not true, it sometimes feels that way. We experience seasonal population surges, dangerous winter driving conditions, and CalTrans road blocks to name a few. When you add to this the fact that there's only one road around this Lake and not many alternate routes (ask us about the Mackinaw Cheat!) you can imagine the road clog. It will soon become second nature to ask yourself what time of day or season it is before you try to get across town or reservations for dinner.

Are you trying to talk me out of it? No. Absolutely no. Living at Lake Tahoe is a privilege. We would go so far as to say it is an honor. The first time you help out a snow-stranded motorist who does not have the forethought to carry a shovel in their car or you relax in traffic watching the poor schlub stuck next to you fuming over the standstill you'll know what it means to be a Tahoe Local. In a nutshell it means helpful people; willing to lend a hand, a shovel, or a beer. It means first name basis and store clerks willing to help if you forgot your wallet, it means having an identity and being a respected member of the community you serve.

Welcome!