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NEWS RELEASE

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TRPA IMPROVES CUSTOMER SERVICE, PREPARES FOR THE CLOSE OF GRADING SEASON

Stateline, NV— October 15th marks the end of the grading and digging season at Lake Tahoe and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is sending an early reminder that permitted projects can only continue past that date if a special exception has been issued by the Agency. The exceptions are generally granted for reasons of public health and safety, emergencies or threats to the Lake's water quality.

While smaller digging and grading projects, like fence post installation, do not require a TRPA permit or a special exception after October 15, grading or soil disturbance for projects under a TRPA permit needs a grading season exception, according to TRPA.

This year TRPA has opened an online application process from its new website to streamline the issuance of grading season exceptions and to make rapid updates in the case of changing weather. Approvals and instant updates on precipitation will be sent electronically to project managers in the field.

Customers can get more information and apply for an exception by calling TRPA or online at www.trpa.org/permitting/inspections-securities/.

Why does Tahoe have a Grading Season?

Grading – the moving or shoveling dirt - is not allowed between October 15 and May 1 at Lake Tahoe because most of Lake Tahoe's precipitation falls during this period, according to meteorological records. All construction sites must be winterized by October 15 and active projects must have paved access in order to continue above-foundation construction through the winter.

TRPA Public Information Officer Jeff Cowen said grading guidelines are in place to prevent precipitation from washing loose soil and muddy flows into the Lake, affecting water quality.

"Lake Tahoe's famed clarity is at stake and we have a commitment to improving customer service," Cowen said. "The new online process is paperless, fast and allows us to safely manage grading exceptions across a broad area more rapidly than ever."

Digging and grading projects that are smaller than 3 cubic yards in size do not need a Grading Season Exception unless the activity is part of a permit. Exempt grading activities can be

completed as long as conditions are dry and it is not part of a larger project that would require a permit.

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency leads the cooperative effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe Region, while improving local communities, and people's interactions with our irreplaceable environment. For additional information, call Jeff Cowen at (775) 589-5278 or email him at jcowen@trpa.org.

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