

First Snow & Ice Storms Hit Sno-Valley

**“Winter Storms,”
continued from front page...**

Main Street in Duvall remained closed throughout the week. Owners Jolene and Charlie Chase who live in Kirkland said that the first part of the week, the snow made it impossible for them and their employees to get to Duvall. By the end of the week, the cafe still could not open due to the power outage in town. Many chose to stay connected online even with the power out.

“I love Duvall and all the amazing people that live in this community,” said Jolene. “I am Facebook friends with many of our customers [and] I was able to see and be part of all the exchange of information that everyone shared, from weather updates, school and road closures, power outages and information if businesses were opened or closed. It was wonderful to see people pull together to help their neighbors and friends.”

Businesses shoveled snow and ice from the sidewalks and, for restaurants like Match, the long power out meant additional cleanup.



A local, private snowplow company made rounds through downtown Duvall. Photo by Anne Laughlin

“We spent yesterday going through our food supply and throwing away things that got lost due to the power outage. We will be re-opening on Tuesday next week (January 24),” said Jolene.

Duvall resident, Brandi Painter, echoed Jolene’s sentiments about the challenging week, saying she felt the community does a good job of staying connected, sharing both information and resources.

“What struck me was how generous people were in their willingness to open their homes to their neighbors, share resources (including the much-coveted generator) and to offer encouragement and support as conditions deteriorated,” said Brandi.

Snowplow for hire

One private business who lent other businesses and residents a helping hand during the storms last week was Tim Peabody who runs his own local snow plowing operation (see photo above). A Duvall resident

for the past 10 years, Peabody took to the streets during the recent storms, starting his work at 2:00am in order to help clear parking lots to help make it safe for businesses to open their doors on time.

Peabody’s resume is impressive with 30 years of equipment operating experience and 25 years as a resident of Alaska where, he said, “a snow event is 6 months” not one or two weeks long.

“Duvall had it light in the beginning [of the week],” said Peabody. “There was nothing here. So I went to Monroe where they had 4-5 inches of snow.” He traveled as far as Monroe, Snohomish and Clearview, helping businesses and residents dig out from the snow and ice, earning \$20 to \$50 per job.

“I enjoy it. It’s fun,” he added. “There is a parking lot full of snow and, in 20 minutes, it is clear.”

Peabody said he was surprised at how little snow was removed during the major winter snows that hit the Puget Sound region in 2008. It prompted him to

start his private snow plowing business. He likes to “just help out and provide the service” which he does at no cost for senior citizens.

“When it snows here I get up at 2:00am, plow 4-5 business parking lots in Duvall and hope to get done at 6:30 am,” he said. He then heads out to his day job as an equipment operator for Seattle Public Utilities at the Tolt Dam which is located on the South Fork of the Tolt River about 16 miles upstream from Carnation.

When Peabody suspends his private plowing service to go take care of his full-time work, he trades in his half-ton, flat-bed all-wheel-drive pickup truck and Meyers snowplow for a 6-wheel-drive grader, a dump truck with a large plow and a sander to plow the drive up to the dam. He said that while the lower Snoqualmie Valley may only have 2 inches of snow on the ground, the area near the Tolt Dam can have 2 feet of snow. A



The branches, needles and pinecones of an Umbrella Pine in Duvall carried the weight of ice and snow. Photo by Anne Laughlin

small snowfall in the valley can add up to a major snowfall there.

When asked about the difference between local snowstorms and Alaskan snowstorms, Peabody was quick to answer. “It’s the temperature that makes the difference,” he said. “In Alaska, the snow is always frozen so you can plow it easily. Around here, the snow isn’t frozen so you have to be careful about what’s under the snow.”

Manhole and valve covers on streets can pose a problem. They stick up above the street surface by a half-inch, just enough to catch on a snowplow and break it.

“You have to be careful about what’s under the snow,” added Peabody. “When you go into a new area, you don’t always know what’s under the snow.” For that reason, Peabody takes his time, works carefully and carries some hefty liability insurance.

He also carries an attitude that fits right in with the communities in the Snoqualmie Valley: he is eager and willing to help others in a time of need. Next time around, if you need snowplow assistance, Peabody can be reached at 425-749-0298.

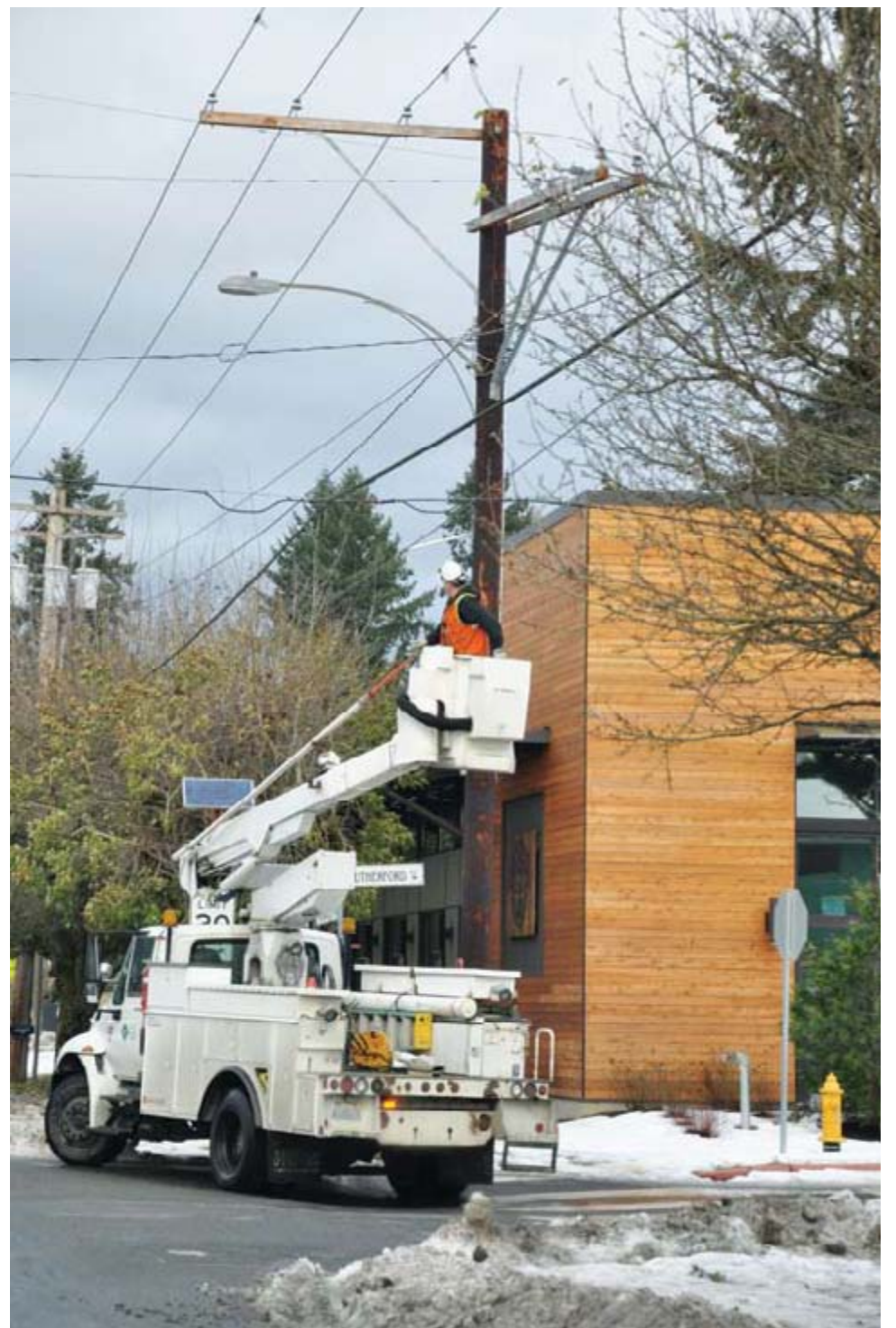
Next up?

Except for another round of rain and wind expected midweek this week, the weather forecast seems to quiet down significantly for the last weekend in January, 2012. Residents and businesses in the valley will likely still be cleaning up from last week’s weather.

Local first responders advise residents to evaluate how well-prepared you were this time around and to prepare for more winter weather ahead. According to the National Weather Service, we are in our second year of the La Nina weather phenomenon, which can mean colder and

wetter weather towards the latter half of winter. Checking and replenishing reserves of food, water, batteries, etc. now will help you be prepared for what comes next, sooner or later. Stay current with the River Current News online, breaking news and more. Visit www.RiverCurrentNews.com.

Thank you to all who emailed us photos and comments last week to Editor@RiverCurrentNews.com!



One of a fleet of Puget Sound Energy trucks stationed in the Lower Sno-Valley to help with storm recovery. A crew member works to restore power near the Carnation Library on Tolt Avenue last Saturday afternoon. Photo by Anne Laughlin