

# PARTIES TO GO ON AT LAKE TULLOCH HOMES



The issue of stricter regulations for vacation homes on Lake Tulloch has bitterly divided residents in the area.

*Courtesy of Jack Forkner*

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SAN ANDREAS - The big parties that pack docks outside vacation rental mansions at Lake Tulloch will rock on for at least one more summer.

The Calaveras County Board of Supervisors, acting on advice from the county's top legal and planning officials, Tuesday delayed action on code amendments that would regulate Tulloch's controversial party houses for the first time.

When the vacation rental code amendments come back to the board on March 26, they will be modified to give the owners of vacation rentals a way to avoid, for another year, new county rules that would limit how many people they can pack into each home's bedrooms.

Both Planning Director Rebecca Willis and County Counsel Janis Elliott said that by phasing in the rules over a year, the county could avoid potential legal conflicts with rental owners who have already booked their rentals for the summer.

"We think a year is a good, reasonable period of time," Willis said.

County planners are proposing a formula under which each vacation rental house could serve two guests per bedroom plus two additional guests. Many vacation rentals, however, advertise much larger capacities. The advertisement for one three-bedroom house, for example, claims it can sleep 19 or 20 people.

That means that renters have already signed contracts for this summer that in some cases specify a party size far in excess of what the new county regulation would allow.

The issue has bitterly divided the Lake Tulloch community. Some residents complain that during the summer, occupants in the vacation rentals generate constant noise, hold large parties and park excessive numbers cars in the area's narrow streets.

Others, in contrast, say the vacation rental industry brings thousands of dollars a week to families and investors who might otherwise be unable to pay mortgages and taxes.

The proposed county ordinance would, for the first time, regulate the crowding and parking problems. Operators of vacation rentals would be required to obtain county permits. If they allow overcrowding, blocked streets and other problems at their homes, they could have their permits revoked.

A board majority has signaled in the past that it intends to regulate the rentals, but it was unclear Tuesday whether their resolve is wavering.

Several supervisors and Willis said they've received a large volume of calls, emails and letters both favoring and opposing the proposed code changes.

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