

Hits and misses: Highlights, lowlights from the week's news

By [Editorial Board](#) | ChicoER.com
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HIT — The report that several dozen properties in Paradise are getting clean water through Paradise Irrigation District lines is one of the most hopeful bits of news yet in the wake of the Camp Fire.

The fire melted plastic plumbing lines and fixtures throughout the district, creating benzene, which then flooded the system. Initially, it appeared most of the district's pipes would have to be replaced, something that would cost tens of millions of dollars, if not hundreds of millions.

That money wasn't there, and without a water system, the town didn't have a future.

But now about 40 homes and businesses are getting safe water. They aren't all in one location, suggesting the overall system is recovering better than had been expected.

There's a long way to go, but it's an encouraging start.

MISS — The Chico Police Department's temporary street crimes unit has made 98 arrests in six weeks. It makes you wonder, what are those criminals doing to us when that unit isn't on the street?

Well, anyone who rides a bicycle can tell you. Getting it (or several) stolen is pretty much to be expected. Chico police say the unit also targets other thefts, robbery, burglary, gun and drug offenses, and even shoplifting if a merchant asks for the help.

With overcrowded jails and lax sentencing laws, numbers of those arrested don't stay off the streets long. But an arrest (or several) is a discouragement if not a deterrent from a life of preying on others.

The unit has just been a summertime thing, when the Chico State University and Butte College breaks free up a number of officers usually dedicated to the campus area. But the City Council — with support from both sides of the political spectrum — has agreed to get the unit on the street year-round in the near future.

HIT— It may be a case of good news, bad news. The good news is there have been no cases of West Nile identified yet in Butte County.

The bad news: Did we just jinx ourselves?

Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control has been on top of the annual fight against mosquitoes, which loomed much larger after the Camp Fire. From damaged septic tank lids to abandoned swimming pools, there has been plenty of breeding havens for mosquitos. The mosquito agency benefited from a grant from North Valley Community Foundation that provided more staffing and products to combat mosquitoes, and the West Nile virus has yet to pop up.

Last year, it was July when West Nile hit local mosquito and bird populations. It hit horses too. It was identified in 11, and killed or led to the putting down of six horses.

Butte County's in the clear — so far. It has been among the worst places, so we wince about what could be ahead.

We hope the advice about long sleeves and pants at sunrise and sunset, plus DEET-containing protection will continue to be heeded so our record stays clean. Fingers are crossed.

MISS — Not sure if we're buying into the concept that giving things away is better for the soul and community, but we've been noticing an increase of free items left on neighborhood sidewalks.

Sometimes it seems that the heap on the sidewalk coincides with the end of a yard sale. Other times, it's one big item like a rusty barbecue or refrigerator.

Some of the waste haulers serving Butte County will take away big items if arrangements are made in advance. Let us repeat: In advance. Put it out without that advance agreement means your neighbors have to walk around it for weeks. Some seem to think the solution is putting a "free" sign on it — like some stranger will stop and put it in their trunk?

Nope. Those items don't disappear and the neighborhood doesn't appreciate having to see the eyesore day after day. Bite the bullet and get rid of it yourself.

"Hits and misses" appears Saturdays. Items are compiled by the editorial board.