

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Lt. Governor Phil Scott works with Sugarbush Resort snowmaking team

Montpelier, VT – Vermont's Lieutenant Governor Phil Scott got hands-on experience in the art and science of making snow while working his latest "Vermont Everyday Job" at Sugarbush Resort in Warren, Vt., on Monday.

With much of the nation on vacation for the holidays, and the first major snowfall of the season slated for Monday night and Tuesday morning, Lt. Gov. Scott arrived at the mountain to find the entire team at Sugarbush hard at work – and happy about it.

"Everyone I saw and met was excited," said Lt. Gov. Scott. "These people live to make snow and they love to make snow. One man I met has been doing it for 16 years and keeps coming back every year to be part of it. There are so many people who have been working in different capacities at Sugarbush for years, or even decades, which really speaks to the sense of teamwork and belief in their mission."

Upon arrival, Lt. Gov. Scott went right to work with the snowmaking team after getting properly outfitted with warm boots, a jacket and a helmet in preparation for the wet, cold, snowy work. Under the guidance of Sugarbush snow services manager Mike Wing, Lt. Gov. Scott helped make snow on the beginner terrain and prepared trails for Tuesday morning.

"After the worst start to the ski season in 50 years, snowmaking is essential to getting the winter back on track," said Sugarbush owner and president Win Smith. "Thanks to our new low-energy equipment we can now put down 43 acres of snow with a one-foot depth in 24 hours. Vermont ski areas have the best snowmaking in New England, and that will be our competitive advantage in the weeks ahead."

As the lieutenant governor quickly learned, making snow involves a lot more than just blowing snow onto the trails. "It's an art and a science combined into one," he said. "You position the snow gun to make piles of snow and then try to connect these 8-foot-tall piles. After that you want to let them settle for a day or two before you groom them. That's part of the art and science mixture."

The other part of the science mixture happens in the pump house and control room, where there is constant communication between the person at the controls and the crews on the mountain. "It's all regulated from that one room," said Lt. Gov. Scott. "That one person is making sure the pumps are all working properly for the snow guns, and that they're scaled up or down depending on the needs of those making snow. It looked like something from the Starship Enterprise!"

"I enjoyed working with Lt. Governor Scott, and I think he learned a lot about what it takes to run a snowmaking system from the on-hill operation to the control room," Mike Wing said.

The snow guns were still blasting when Lt. Gov. Scott wrapped up for the evening, and the excitement was still in the air.

"I saw so many people working, but also a lot of children coming out to slide on the snow. Sugarbush even set up lights so the kids could keep playing into the evening. It was a festive atmosphere," he said. "The last 48 hours seem to have made a huge difference in the morale because they can see there's snow at the end of the tunnel."

Resort officials say that, with a combination of snowmaking and natural snowfall, Sugarbush will be open top-to-bottom at both mountains Wednesday with 22 trails.

Monday's work at the Warren ski resort is part of Lt. Gov. Scott's "Vermont Everyday Jobs" initiative, which he started in 2011. Scott has worked more than 35 such jobs so far in a wide variety of organizations, ranging from beekeeping to manufacturing to health care. These hands-on experiences have given Scott a personal appreciation for how state government can address the true concerns of Vermont businesses, their owners and employees.

Photos attached. Mandatory credit: Sugarbush Resort / Hans Jonathan von Briesen

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