

## Health issues send Gillham back to US

Contributed by Elizabeth Larson

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LAKEPORT &ndash; Lakeport City Manager Jerry Gillham has been sent back to the United States from Iraq after suffering health issues a few weeks ago.

Gillham, 53, was sent to Iraq last summer on his second year-long deployment to that country as a member of the Oregon National Guard, as Lake County News has reported.

While in Iraq, he suffered a transient ischemic attack &ndash; or a TIA, according to interim city manager, Kevin Burke. &ldquo;We can confirm that he has suffered a noncombat-related injury,&rdquo; said Capt. Stephen Bomar of the Oregon National Guard.

According to the American Heart Association, a TIA is a warning or mini-stroke that produces stroke-like symptoms but no lasting damage because of its extremely short duration.

The condition is caused when a blood clot temporarily clogs an artery, keeping blood from a part of the brain. TIAs average about one minute in duration.

Symptoms include sudden numbness in the face, leg or arm, on one side of the body; confusion; trouble seeing in one or both eyes; trouble walking; dizziness; loss of balance or coordination; and sudden, severe headache.

TIAs are considered extremely important predictors of strokes, the American Heart Association reported. Although most strokes aren't associated with TIAs, more than a third of the people who have one or more TIAs later experience an actual stroke.

A few days after having the TIA, Gillham fell, injuring several discs in his back which may require back surgery, said Burke.

Earlier this year Gillham has said he'd recently had back surgery previously for other back problems he has suffered.

Gillham received medical treatment in Iraq and Europe, said Bomar. &ldquo;He is en route back home at this time.&rdquo;

Burke said Gillham is now back in the United States at a hospital at Fort Lewis, Wash.

Bomar said Gillham remains on active duty status, but he did not know how long the transition might take for Gillham to return to Lakeport.

&ldquo;That all depends on what happens,&rdquo; said Bomar. &ldquo;They will provide him the best medical care available.&rdquo;

Burke said Gillham is set to meet with doctors to follow up on the diagnosis.

The city has so far received no other updates from Gillham or his family on the city manager's condition or when he might eventually return to his post at the city, Burke said.

E-mail Elizabeth Larson at [el Larson@lakeconews.com](mailto:el Larson@lakeconews.com).

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