



News Release

South Tahoe Public Utility District
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Water Service Line Inventory in South Lake Tahoe

South Lake Tahoe, CA (November 13, 2024) – As part of a nationwide effort to protect communities from lead exposure, South Tahoe Public Utility District is encouraging residents to help identify the material of their water service line. While no lead water service lines have been identified in South Lake Tahoe to date, residents with unknown service line materials are urged to follow five easy steps to determine the material their water line.

A water service line is the pipe that connects your home to the public water main in the street. These pipes can be made of galvanized steel or iron, plastic, copper, or lead. While water provided by South Tahoe Public Utility District is free of lead, lead can get into your drinking water as it passes through pipes and faucets containing lead. Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health problems.

“Fortunately, lead pipes were not commonly used in California and the District has not seen lead service lines in our water system at this point in time,” said Paul Hughes, General Manager. “To help the District complete our inventory, we are asking residents to test their water service line and complete a quick survey.”

In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2% lead, and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes, and other plumbing material to 8.0%. In the same year, California enacted an even more restrictive lead plumbing ban. If your home was built after 1986, your service lateral should not be lead. Homes built before this time may have lead pipes, and testing is the best way to confirm.

How to Test Your Water Service Line for Lead

To help identify whether your water service line contains lead, follow these simple steps:

1. **Locate your water service line** – Your water service line will usually enter your home through a crawlspace or garage.
2. **Scratch test** – Find a spot on the water service line closest to the wall or floor where it enters, and before it connects to a valve or your home plumbing. Use a screwdriver or coin to scratch lightly (like you would a lottery ticket). What color is it?
3. **Magnet Test** – Place a refrigerator magnet on the pipe. Does it stick?
4. **Take a picture** – Take a picture of where you performed the scratch and magnet test.
5. **Complete survey** – Fill out South Tahoe Public Utility District’s online survey at stpud.watersmart.com/WaterLineSurvey



Identifying Water Line Materials

- Plastic - If your water service line is white, blue, green, or black, doesn't change colors when scratched, and a magnet does not stick, it is made of plastic.
- Galvanized - If your water service line remains a dull gray when scratched and the magnet sticks, it is galvanized steel or iron.
- Copper - If your water service line looks like the color of a penny and the magnet does not stick, it is copper.
- Lead – If your water service line looks shiny and silver when scratched and a magnet does NOT stick, it is lead. Please contact South Tahoe Public Utility District and we will confirm the material and work with you to replace it.

“The District prioritizes providing high quality drinking water and is proud that our water meets all state and federal drinking water standards,” said Hughes.

For more information on South Tahoe Public Utility District's water service line inventory, visit stpud.us or call 530-544-6474.

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