



Your Water is Safe and Pure Water Quality and Safety FAQs

In North America, no one should have to question the safety of water at the tap. Our customers can trust TCPUD to provide clean, safe water that meets or exceeds all State and Federal drinking water standards. With the current situation in Flint Michigan, we understand there may be some questions regarding water quality. We assure you that water supplied by TCPUD is exceptionally safe and high quality. Below you will find some FAQs to help further explain TCPUD water quality and safety.

Q: Is TCPUD water tested?

A: Yes, TCPUD water is tested regularly to ensure your water meets or exceeds all State and Federal drinking water standards. Much of this testing is required by law and includes State oversight, but additional tests or increased testing frequency are routinely performed by TCPUD as internal measures to ensure an even higher standard in water quality and safety.

Q: How many and how often are tests performed?

A: As part of our overall Water Quality Program, TCPUD water utility staff regularly collect water over 300 samples annually throughout the District. All water samples are evaluated by certified, third party environmental laboratories accredited by the State of California, Environment Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP).

Distribution system bacteriological monitoring is required by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and by the US EPA through the Total Coliform Rule. The objective of this testing is to monitor for the presence of certain bacteria which may be an indicator of other pathogens in the drinking water. TCPUD takes total coliform samples weekly, totaling approximately 240 per year, to ensure all water going through the distribution system is absent of bacteria and complies with the Total Coliform Rule.

Source water bacteriological monitoring is also required by SWRCB. Samples are taken quarterly at each of the District's active water sources to monitor the source water, like the distribution system, for bacterial activity. Additionally, these tests are required monthly at the water treatment plant that serves the Chamberlands/McKinney area during summer operation.

Disinfectant residual and disinfection byproducts monitoring are required by the US EPA Disinfection By-Products Rule. Monitoring is performed regularly and reports are provided to SWRCB quarterly. The purpose of this testing is to ensure the trace amounts of chlorine used to keep the system disinfected and any possible byproducts generated by the disinfectant both remain below the maximum allowable levels.

Lead and Copper Rule monitoring is also performed every three years for each TCPUD system. These tests are ideally performed at residences which were typically built after 1982 and before 1986 which have a higher likelihood of having internal plumbing consisting of copper pipes that were joined using lead containing solder. Lead containing solder was banned in 1986 by the State of California. Samples are taken within individual residences under strict guidelines to ensure test accuracy. It was this testing and the resulting issues that put Flint, MI in the news.

Q: How do I know what the results of these tests are?

A: The numerous and ongoing tests for contaminants such as; lead, arsenic, copper and bacteria are summarized in an annual water quality report. This report, known as the Consumer Confidence Report, must be published and made available to all customers by June 30th each year.

Notices that the Consumer Confidence Report is available are mailed to each customer (owner of record) and posted to our website (<http://www.tcpud.org/ccr/current.pdf>). We encourage customers to view the report on our website. However, we can provide hard copies by mail upon request. Please call (530) 580-6325 if you would like a copy mailed to you.

Q: What do these test results really mean?

A: We recognize that there is a lot of information contained in the consumer confidence report. However, in its basic form the consumer confidence report presents customers with the levels of detected contaminants in your water, what the acceptable levels of these contaminants are, and what the potential health effects of the detected contaminants might be. We are pleased to report that all standards are currently met or exceeded by TCPUD water. If you have specific questions or want a more detailed explanation of the test results please contact Dan Lewis, Utilities Superintendent, at (530)580-6330.

Q: Why was Flint's water so high in Lead?

A: We do not have firsthand information about Flint, however, it has been reported that Flint's water infrastructure includes a significant amount of lead service pipes. This is not, in and of itself a problem, unless the water passing through lead pipes has corrosive properties. Corrosive water will leach lead (and copper) from the piping and joints, thereby raising the amount of lead and/or copper in the water to above acceptable levels coming out of the tap. It has been reported that when Flint changed their source of water, the new source was much more corrosive and was not properly treated for that condition, thereby leading to lead contamination issues.

Q: Why wasn't Flint's lead contamination caught sooner?

A: Consistent and proper testing methods are critical to obtain accurate test results. For lead and copper tests, water is taken from residential faucets rather than at the source or distribution points (as is the case for most testing). To have an accurate test, the water MUST sit in the piping for between 6-12 hours without any flushing of the home's water system. Furthermore, samples MUST be taken immediately when a tap is turned on, also known as "first draw". If water does not sit in the pipes for the specific 6-12 hour window or if a faucet is allowed to "flush" prior to obtaining a sample, the water analysis will not yield accurate results. If the testing methods in Flint were not properly administered, the high lead content could go undetected.

Q: Is TCPUD water at risk for lead contamination?

A: The TCPUD is not aware of any lead service pipes in our water system or in our customers pipes and the amount of lead containing solder used to join copper pipes in our area's households is very low. However, we routinely test for lead and copper using a strict protocol and the cooperation of homeowners to properly obtain samples from their homes. The protocol, which must be strictly

followed and signed by the homeowner can be found here ([Link](#)). TCPUD has rejected samples that have not been collected and/or attested to exactly as required by the testing protocol.

Q: What if I want my water tested?

A: The test the TCPUD commissions uses an independent lab for Lead and Copper evaluation and costs about \$60 per sample. If you would like to have your tap water independently tested, TCPUD is happy to assist you in obtaining your own test and results. To request assistance call the utilities department at 530-580-6325.

Other steps you can take to protect your family, include purchasing a certified water filter, making sure you flush out the lines after a period of stagnation (and use it to water plants) in order to get fresh water that is coming from the main, and avoiding consuming water from the hot water tap, where lead or other contaminants are more likely to be present. To find a listing of certified water filters please visit the NSF website: <http://www.nsf.org> or the State water Resources Control Board website at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/device/watertreatmentdevices.shtml You can also find more guidance at www.DrinkTap.org.

The situation in Flint highlights that our job as a water provider is to protect the families we serve. We at TCPUD take very seriously our obligation to protect our public's health. Please contact us at (530) 580-6325 if you have any questions or concerns regarding your water quality and safety.