

# Northeast Fresno residents hear findings of water-quality study

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Over 100 concerned residents gathered inside the Kastner Intermediate School cafeteria Tuesday evening to hear from water officials on their probe into discolored water appearing in northeast Fresno homes.

After an “exhaustive” 90-day study, officials said the water in northeast Fresno is safe and the problem appears to have been pinned down to three things: corroding, unwrapped galvanized piping; dissimilar metal corrosion; and soil erosion.

Fresno Public Utilities Director Thomas Esqueda said the city switched to solely groundwater, instead of surface water from the Sierra, to establish a baseline as they tested their water supply for metals, including lead. They couldn’t find lead in the groundwater, surface water or the distribution system.

Esqueda said that out of the 124 homes sampled in the area with discoloring, only 37 homes were found to have trace levels of lead that were above the federal threshold of 13 parts per billion. Most of the discoloration was the result of stagnation in rarely used fixtures and disappeared after the pipes were flushed. An additional 23 homes were scheduled to be tested.

City water officials plan to retest the 37 homes to find the exact origin of the lead and whether it could be in a fixture in the home or whether it was in the pipes. If the tests come back positive again with lead, a few things could be done to fix the problem. The pipes inside the homes would have to be replaced or a filter can be added to the fixture that has the contaminant.

Another public meeting is scheduled in 30 days.

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