



County Administration Office

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PRESS RELEASE

DATE: October 10, 2025

CLARIFICATION ON PUBLIC HYDRANT INSTALLATION AND PERMIT PROCESS ON HIGH SCHOOL ROAD

Tuolumne County Administration is providing clarification regarding the installation of a public fire hydrant and related construction permitting on High School Road, following recent questions and reports concerning project approvals and water use.

The public hydrant referenced in recent discussions was first reviewed in early 2024 during a meeting with County staff, including representatives from CAO, Facilities, Public Works, and the Community Development Departments, and was coordinated with the Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD). At that time, the County confirmed that the hydrant would be located on County-owned property within the public right-of-way and connected to a County-owned and maintained water line.

During a subsequent meeting in spring 2024, TUD staff confirmed that water usage from public hydrants designated for fire safety is not metered, and therefore, not billable to the County. Consistent with this information, then County Administrative Officer and Assistant County Administrator approved moving forward with the installation of the hydrant on April 19, 2024, authorizing the work to proceed.

The hydrant in question is a public hydrant, not a private one, and its installation complies with applicable Fire and County codes. Under California Fire Code Chapter 1, Section 105.7.19, a construction permit is only required for private hydrants. County Ordinance Title 15.20.030 establishes standards for hydrant installation, which were met in this case. The hydrant was also shown on the plans previously approved by County staff.

Regarding building permits associated with the High School Road project, multiple permits were issued by Tuolumne County on April 21, 2025, following submission of an engineer's letter addressing collateral loading concerns. Amador County issued the permit for one specific structure ("Building C") after the Board of Supervisors approved governance manual updates allowing other jurisdictions to assist with permits and inspections in cases where the administration determines there might be a conflict of interest.

All pending administrative processes associated with this clarification will be completed as appropriate and in accordance with all applicable county ordinances. Some details associated with this clarification may be restricted if they directly relate to personnel matters, which are confidential and protected by law. Tuolumne County administration remains committed to transparency and factual communication regarding public infrastructure and development projects.

"We Support the Board of Supervisors in implementing their policies and promoting fiscal sustainability through service & collaboration with the County Departments and the Community"