

Pipe Keepers Program Information



About the Pipe Keepers program

Pipe Keepers is the League's citizen science program to address stormwater runoff into Lake Tahoe. When rain hits our roads and parking lots it washes fine sediment—the number one threat to Lake clarity—and other pollutants into storm drains that lead to the Lake. Community members are trained to assess and monitor the condition of stormwater infrastructure all year long and collect stormwater samples for turbidity analysis during the first big storm of the year and large snowmelt events. Volunteer efforts help League staff locate and address pipes that are dumping high levels of sediment into Lake Tahoe. League staff then collaborate with agency partners to find solutions for the most-polluting pipes, so we can stop the pollution before it enters Lake Tahoe.

Pipe Keepers Duties

It is important to regularly assess pipes throughout the Tahoe Basin to identify sources of pollution. As a Pipe Keeper, you will be asked to monitor your pipe during the last week of each month and complete a Monthly Pipe Assessment form, as well as take pictures of associated infrastructure. Monthly monitoring will assist in detecting failures and acute issues with the pipe's infrastructure.

Initial Pipe Assessment

Pipe Keepers can discover or may be asked to assess new pipes with the [Initial Pipe Assessment](#). If you are assessing a pipe and believe it is the first time the pipe has been monitored, your first step will be to check the League's pipe map at keptahoebblue.org/pipes or to contact the Natural Resources team at protect@keptahoebblue.org.

Monthly Pipe Assessment

If a pipe has already been assessed, use the [Monthly Pipe Assessment](#). Always include complementary photos of your pipe and associated infrastructure with your assessment. While monitoring, we encourage Pipe Keepers to pick up any nearby litter and clear storm drains throughout the watershed. Please fill out the assessments as completely as possible.

Submit your initial assessment online at:

keptahoebblue.org/initial-pipe-assessment

Submit your monthly assessment online at:

keptahoebblue.org/monthly-pipe-assessment

Biannual Basin Blitzes

If interested and available, you may also choose to participate in biannual "basin blitzes". These are coordinated stormwater sampling events conducted during one of the first major storms of the season as well as during large snowmelt events. During the blitzes, Pipe Keepers collect stormwater samples to be analyzed for turbidity, or clarity of the water. Pipe Keepers who have never sampled before will accompany a Pipe Keeper who is familiar with the process and who will train you in how to collect stormwater samples in the future.