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## Underwater Inspections Keep TMWA's Water Safe

The water coming from your tap first goes through a extensive treatment process, keeping it that way involves going somewhere most never get to see.

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RENO, NV - It may help to think of the Hunter Creek Reservoir as a big water bed, a water bed covering several acres and containing 30 million gallons.

"That's a good analogy," says Christ Struffert, the Truckee Meadows Water Authority's Senior Engineer. "It's got a liner on the top and on the bottom and when you walk on it, it sloshes around your feet."

The water stored here has been already been treated at the Truckee Meadows Water Authority's Chalk Bluff Treatment Plant and pumped here, ready for use in your home. TMWA wants to keep it that way.

Making sure this reservoir is doing its job keeping all that water safe and secure is Richard Peterson's job.

Once a year, he dons dry suit, helmet, and, after being disinfected, dives into that big water bed and looks for problems.

His helmet is equipped with two-way communication and a camera. What he sees down here is monitored by the surface crew.

Today we see tiny bits of sediment, a little corrosion and a couple of loose bolts. Little else.

"We don't expect to find problems," says Struffert, " and today we didn't."

The forty plus tanks and reservoirs in TMWA's system are periodically inspected like this. Hunter Creek Reservoir is the largest storage unit in the system, so it gets checked each year.

"It's basically a proactive program that we have to identify any visual problems we may have, corrosion, leaks, anything out of the ordinary," says Struffert.

And if they find problems?

"If it's a minor issue that we don't think is in need of repair immediately we can dive it again next year. We can dive it in 5 years. He also has the ability to make repairs.'

"If the reservoir is OK, the water coming out of it should be alright?"

"Our water quality is something we're very proud of and if there's a problem that will affect it we want to catch it before it becomes an issue."

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