

Concrete firm accused of doctoring paperwork

By Kathryn Reed

A local concrete company is being accused of falsifying paperwork involving work done for the city of South Lake Tahoe.

Each year a professional engineer certifies the mix of concrete. While the ingredients, so to speak, don't change, there is a concoction created for each year.

City officials contend Sierra Tahoe Ready Mix used the 2011 batch in 2013. In providing the "old" supply the company also allegedly falsified documents to say this was the current mix.

Ray Jarvis, head of the city's public works department, told *Lake Tahoe News*, "At this point we don't think there is a structural issue."

He says this because at the site samples are taken to test the strength of the concrete.

The "old" concrete was used in at least the Bijou erosion control project. The city is looking at other projects that might be affected.

No one from Sierra Tahoe Ready Mix returned calls.

Officers with the South Lake Tahoe Police Department, El Dorado County Sheriff's Office and El Dorado District Attorneys Office searched the business this week and came away with undisclosed items. The DA's office is leading the fraud investigation.

The Chateau project and all of the recent work done in Lake Tahoe Unified School District exclusively used Sierra Tahoe

Ready Mix for concrete.

“What really matters to us in the end is if the concrete meets the specifications and comes up to the strength. It has done that 100 percent of the time. There is no question about the Chateau project,” Joe Stewart with SMC Contracting told *Lake Tahoe News*. SMC is building the retail out at the Chateau and is also the firm that put in the original foundation at the site.

Stewart added, “There is a significant amount of independent testing when we pour concrete.”

Thousands of yards of concrete from Sierra Tahoe Ready Mix have also been used throughout LTUSD.

“For every 50 yards of concrete delivered to one of our projects we take a series of test cylinders for the concrete. This is done by an independent engineering firm,” Steve Morales, LTUSD director of facilities, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We never had any concrete that did not meet the ultimate specifications.”