



SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR

Ryan Flynn, *Cabinet Secretary*

Butch Tongate, *Deputy Secretary*

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Jim Winchester
Communications Director
New Mexico Environment Department
(505)231-8800 / jim.winchester@state.nm.us

Environment Department Confirms Precautionary “Boil Water Advisory” Issued By City of Farmington

Customers are urged to Boil Water Prior to Drinking

(Farmington, N.M.) – The New Mexico Environment Department’s Drinking Water Bureau has been in contact with the City of Farmington and confirms their precautionary “Boil Water Advisory” for the City of Farmington. NMED stands ready to assist if needed in this effort.

The City of Farmington initially issued an advisory on September 14, 2014 after a malfunction occurred at the City’s Water Treatment Plant #2. As a result, bacterial contamination may have occurred in the water system. Contamination may have occurred from unfiltered lake water. Bacteria are common throughout our environment and are not generally harmful. However, whenever a water system is compromised, precautionary measures are recommended.

NMED requires the City of Farmington to notify water system consumers of this event, which they have completed. This advisory only applies to the drinking water in the City of Farmington, and does not extend to any other surrounding water systems.

Consumers in Farmington are advised to boil the water for five minutes before drinking, cooking, dishwashing and bathing. Unfiltered lake water always has the chance to contain *E. coli* if in contact with sewage or animal wastes, and could contain disease-causing organisms. Most strains of *E. coli* are harmless and live in the intestines of healthy humans and animals. However, if there is *E. coli* in the drinking water supply, it may indicate the presence of dangerous strains of *E. coli* or other disease-causing organisms. These types of organisms may cause severe gastrointestinal illness and, in rare cases, death. Children, the elderly and immuno-compromised individuals are at an increased risk for illness.

It is important to note that there have been NO REPORTED POSITIVE TEST RESULTS for the presence of *E. coli* at this time. Samples are in the process of being analyzed. NMED and the City of Farmington will follow-up immediately if a sample turns up positive for *E. coli*. Likewise, all chlorine samples collected thus far have indicated normal chlorine levels. Hydrants in the affected area are being flushed and samples are being collected for bacterial analysis. The City of Farmington estimates that the problem will be resolved within 36

to 48 hours. The NMED Drinking Water Bureau has offered technical assistance to the City of Farmington and will be available if additional assistance is needed.

All media inquiries should be directed to CH2M HILL at (505) 326-1918. Attached is the initial advisory sent by the City of Farmington on September 14th, 2014 & a copy of guidelines for restaurants during Boil Water Advisories.

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