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State Officials Lift “BOIL WATER ADVISORY” for Mississippi Potash East Water System

(Santa Fe, NM) – Today the New Mexico Environment Department’s Drinking Water Bureau and the Department of Health, Office of Epidemiology, advised the Mississippi Potash East Water System to lift a boil water advisory for the consumers within the company’s potash mine work site.

The Mississippi Potash East water system in Eddy County near Carlsbad was put on a “boil water” advisory on November 14, due to bacteriological contamination that exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for *E. coli* bacteria. Most strains of *E. coli* are harmless and live in the intestines of healthy humans and animals. However, the presence of *E. coli* in water indicates that the water may have been in contact with sewage or animal wastes, and could contain disease-causing organisms. Consumers of the mine site water system were advised to boil water for five minutes before drinking, cooking and dishwashing.

Water system representatives thoroughly disinfected and flushed the water system over the weekend. Results of nine water samples taken on Monday showed that the water system was adequately disinfected. As a result, the Environment and Health departments determined that it was safe to lift the boil water advisory. The Environment Department has also asked the water system to update its water-sampling plan to include analysis of treated water, which will better reflect the quality of drinking water provided to the consumers of the mine site water.

For more information about the water system contact Rozanne Johnson, Hydrologist, NMED, at (505) 393-4302 or Ken Marshall, Hydrologist, NMED at (505) 762-3728.