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Immediate Release

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Environment Department Issues “BOIL WATER ORDER” for Boles Acres Water System

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department’s (NMED) Drinking Water Bureau has ordered Boles Acres Water System to issue a “boil water order” for its customers.

Boles Acres is about 6 miles south of Alamogordo in Otero County and its water system serves approximately 900 customers. The Boles Acres Water System was originally put on a “drinking water advisory” on June 5, 2006, due to flash flooding in the area that submerged a drinking water supply well. Subsequent testing of the water indicates no chemical contamination is present in the water system, but bacteriological contamination was detected.

The water system was put on a “boil water order” today, June 9, 2006, due to bacteriological contamination that exceeded The Maximum Contamination Level (MCL) for E. coli. NMED has required that the system owner and operator notify all customers served by the system of this finding.

Water consumers at Boles Acres are advised to boil water for five minutes before drinking, cooking, and dishwashing.

The presence of E. coli in water indicates that the water may have been in contact with sewage and/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, a positive test for E. coli in the drinking water supply may indicate the presence of dangerous strains of E. coli or other disease causing organisms, which are sometimes found in sewage or animal wastes. These types of organisms may cause severe gastrointestinal illness and, in rare cases, even death. Children, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals are at an increased risk for illness.

Actions have been and will further be initiated to identify possible source(s) of contamination, complete any mechanical repairs, establish acceptable disinfection, and flush out the water system. In addition, the Drinking Water Bureau will continue to test the water until the system is fully functional and no further threat of contamination remains. The New Mexico Department of Health has also been notified and will remain on alert for any health effects linked to this water quality issue. Consumers of the water system may call (505) 827-0006, if they have any water-related health concerns.

For more information contact Mike Huber, DWB-DII & IV Manager, at (505) 476-8638, or Adam Rankin, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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