



BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
Office of the Secretary
Harold Runnels Building
1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110
Telephone (505) 827-2855
Fax (505) 827-2836



RON CURRY
SECRETARY

DERRITH WATCHMAN-MOORE
DEPUTY SECRETARY

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Immediate Release

Contact: Rozanne Johnson, Hydrologist, NMED DWB
Phone: (505) 393-4302
Contact: Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Director
Phone: (505) 827-0314

Environment Department Issues Order to Lovington Country Club for High Nitrate Levels in Drinking Water

(Lovington, NM) – The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) today issued a Public Notification Order to The Lovington Country Club in Lovington for violations of state Drinking Water Regulations. Beginning in December of 2002, the well at the water system has exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for nitrate in drinking water.

The Lovington Country Club is to immediately provide bottled water of acceptable quality to pregnant customers and all families with children under the age of six, notify all customers of the nitrate MCL, and conduct a feasibility study to determine what changes are needed to provide water within acceptable standards. Failure to comply with the requirement of the order may result in civil penalties.

The Lovington Country Club provides piped drinking water to approximately 50 consumers.

Nitrate in drinking water is a serious health concern for infants. Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and, if not given treatment, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and a blue or gray coloring of the skin (often referred to as “blue baby syndrome”). Symptoms in infants can develop rapidly, with health deteriorating over a period of days. Although infants under six months are at greatest risk, pregnant and nursing women and children under eight years of age should limit their intake of tap water until nitrate levels decrease. If symptoms occur, consumers of the water system should seek medical attention immediately.

Consumers of The Lovington Country Club **SHOULD NOT BOIL** their water. Boiling will increase the level of nitrates in the water. Bottled water or other water from an approved water source should be used until further notice.

For additional information, contact Rozanne Johnson, Hydrologist, NMED DWB at (505) 393-4302, or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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