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Mountain View Elementary School in Moriarty Takes Action to Address Water Issue; School to Remain Open Thursday and Friday

(Santa Fe, NM) – After discovering bacteriological contamination that exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for Fecal Coliform at the Mountain View Elementary School in Moriarty, the New Mexico Environment Department's (NMED) Drinking Water Bureau and the school have taken quick action to address this water issue. These actions include a shock chlorination of the system Tuesday evening, further water samples taken today and the distribution of bottled water.

Based upon these actions it has been determined that the school can and will remain open Thursday and Friday.

Results from tests run of today's samples are due back in 24 hours. Pending these results the "boil water order" remains in effect for this facility. Users of the water system have been asked to boil water for five minutes before drinking, cooking and dishwashing. Mountain View Elementary School has also limited access to all water fountains to assure that the children do not drink the water.

The Mountain View Elementary School is located in Torrance County approximately seven miles from the town of Moriarty.

The presence of fecal coliform in water indicates that the water may have been in contact with sewage or animal wastes, and could contain disease-causing organisms. Most strains of fecal coliform are harmless and live in the intestines of healthy humans and animals. However, a positive test for fecal coliform in the drinking water supply may indicate the presence of dangerous strains of fecal coliform 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 immuno-compromised individuals are at an increased risk for illness.

Actions have been initiated to disinfect the water system and identify possible sources of contamination. In addition, the Drinking Water Bureau will continue to assist with trouble-shooting to identify the source of the problem.

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