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Environment Department Advises “BOIL WATER ORDER” for Mountain View Elementary School in Moriarty

(Santa Fe, NM) –The New Mexico Environment Department’s (NMED) Drinking Water Bureau has advised the Mountain View Elementary School in Moriarty to issue a “boil water order” for its facility.

The Mountain View Elementary School, located in Moriarty in Torrance County, approximately seven miles from Moriarty, was put on a “boil water advisory” on February 10, 2004 due to bacteriological contamination that exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for Fecal Coliform. NMED requires that the school notify all consumers served by the school water system of this finding.

Users of the water system have been asked to boil water for five minutes before drinking, cooking and dishwashing. Mountain View Elementary School has notified NMED that bottled water will be provided for drinking, and that any water used for food preparation will meet NMED requirements. Access will be limited to all water fountains to assure that the children do not drink the water. In addition, school officials have decided to close school operations on Thursday and Friday, February 12th and 13th, 2004.

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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