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**Environment Department Issues “Drinking Water Advisory” for Ponderosa  
Restaurant Water System**

(Santa Fe, NM) –The New Mexico Environment Department’s (NMED) Drinking Water Bureau has advised the Ponderosa Restaurant to issue a “Drinking Water Advisory” for its consumers. The Ponderosa Restaurant serves approximately 25 consumers in Bernalillo County. It is located in the East Mountain area on Highway 14 about 9 miles south of I-40.

The water system has exceeded the maximum contaminant level for nitrate. NMED requires that the system notify all customers served by that system of this finding. Ponderosa Restaurant serves bottled water to customers and uses water that undergoes additional treatment for food preparation. The water produced from the well is only used to wash dishes and supply water to bathrooms.

Consumers of the Ponderosa Restaurant water system are advised not to give the water to infants or pregnant consumers. Infants who drink water could become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue baby syndrome. Blue baby syndrome is indicated by blueness of the skin. Symptoms in infants develop rapidly, with health deteriorating over a period of days. Although infants 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.

Water, juice and formula for children under six months of age should not be prepared with tap water. **Do not boil the water.** Boiling, freezing, filtering, or letting water stand does not reduce the nitrate level; in fact, boiling can make the nitrates more concentrated. Adults and children older than six months can drink the tap water, however, if you have specified health concerns, you may wish to consult your doctor.

Nitrate in drinking water can come from natural, industrial, or agricultural sources (including septic systems and run-off). Levels of nitrate in drinking water can vary throughout the year. The water system will submit a plan to NMED for improved operations and treatment performance.

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) 476-3028 if they have any water-related health concerns.

For more information contact Angela Faye Cross, Civil Engineer, NMED at (505) 222-9529 or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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