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**Environment Department Issues a “BOIL WATER ORDER” for Vallecitos
MDWCA**

(Santa Fe, NM) – The New Mexico Environment Department’s (NMED) Drinking Water Bureau has advised the Vallecitos Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association (MDWCA) to issue a “boil water order” for its customers.

The Vallecitos MDWCA serves approximately 96 consumers in Rio Arriba County, located approximately 45 miles northwest of the City of Española. The Association’s water system was put on a “boil water order” on May 20, 2005, due to a Treatment Technique Violation for exceeding acceptable turbidity levels.

Consumers of the Association’s water system are advised to boil water for five minutes before drinking, cooking, dishwashing and brushing teeth.

Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection (chlorine residuals) and provide a medium for microbial growth. High turbidity levels may indicate the presence of disease causing organisms.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets drinking water standards and has determined that the presence of microbiological contaminants are a health concern at certain levels of exposure. If water is inadequately treated, microbiological contaminants in the water may cause disease. Disease symptoms may include diarrhea, cramps, nausea, and possibly jaundice, and any associated headaches and fatigue. These symptoms, however, are not just associated with disease causing organisms in drinking water. EPA has set enforceable requirements for treating drinking water to reduce the risk of these adverse health effects. Treatment such as filtering and disinfecting the water removes or destroys microbiological contaminants. Drinking water, which is treated to meet EPA requirements, is associated with little to none of this risk and should be considered safe.

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 Manager, at (505) 827-7536 x.1009 or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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