



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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Contact: Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Dir.
Phone: (505) 827-0314

Environment Department Offers Free Well Water Tests, Makes Maps of State's Groundwater Available on the Internet

(Santa Fe, NM) — Environment Secretary Ron Curry today announced that users of private wells can have a sample of their water tested for free in any New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) field office. These free tests will analyze the sample for fluoride, iron, and nitrate. Tests for pH, electrical conductivity (a measure of total minerals) and organic vapor also may be provided depending on instrument availability.

Instructions on how to collect a well water sample and a list of NMED Field Offices is available on the NMED website, http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/fod/LiquidWaste/well_testing.html.

“Everyone benefits from this free testing,” said Secretary Curry. “Rural residents on private wells get vital information about the quality of their drinking water, and NMED gets valuable data on the quality of the aquifers we are mandated to protect.”

NMED is using water test data to map the quality and sensitivity of ground water statewide. The first set of aquifer maps have been posted on the NMED website, <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/fod/LiquidWaste/aoc.html>, and more are currently being drawn. The mapping effort, being done in cooperation with the Office of the State Engineer, will eventually be published as an interactive on-line Geographic Information System (GIS).

The free testing offer is limited to samples from private domestic wells. Samples from public drinking-water systems will not be tested. These public water supplies are routinely tested, as required by the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, and those test results may be obtained by contacting the NMED Drinking Water Bureau, 505-827-1400, <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/dwb/dwbtop.html>.

For further information contact Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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