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For Immediate Release

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**Environment Department Issues “Boil Water Advisory” for Chippeway Water System in Otero County**

*Customers are urged to Boil Water Prior to Drinking*

(Santa Fe, N.M.) –The New Mexico Environment Department’s Drinking Water Bureau issued a “boil water advisory” for the Chippeway Water System.

NMED issued the advisory on today after bacteriological contamination (*E. coli*) was discovered in one of the drinking water sources for the system. NMED requires the system, located in Cox Canyon approximately 16 miles east of Alamogordo in Otero County, to notify water consumers of the finding.

This advisory only applies to the drinking water at the Chippeway Water System, and does not extend to any of the other surrounding water systems.

Consumers of the Cheppeway System are advised to boil the water for five minutes before drinking, cooking, dishwashing and bathing. The presence of *E. coli* 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 *E. coli* are harmless and live in the intestines of healthy humans and animals. However, a positive test for *E. coli* in the drinking water supply may indicate the presence of dangerous strains of *E. coli* or other disease-causing organisms. These types of organisms may cause severe gastrointestinal illness and, in rare cases, death. Children, the elderly and immuno-compromised individuals are at an increased risk for illness.

The NMED Drinking Water Bureau will provide technical assistance to the water system and will test the water until no further threat of contamination remains.

For more information, call NMED Communications Director Marissa Stone Bardino at (505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475 or Joe Savage, Drinking Water Bureau District IV Manager, at (575) 437-7115.

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