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**NMED Issues “Boil Water Alert” for Morningstar Water Users Association in San Juan County**

(Santa Fe, NM) –The New Mexico Environment Department’s Drinking Water Bureau advised the Morningstar Water Users Association to issue a “boil water order” for its water system.

NMED issued the advisory after bacteriological contamination that exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for E. coli was discovered in drinking water from the water system. NMED requires Morningstar Water Users Association water system in San Juan County to notify its consumers of the finding.

Contamination was found in the Anasazi Estates Subdivision based on water samples from that location. However, all consumers of the Morningstar Water Users Association water system are advised to boil water for five minutes before drinking, cooking and dishwashing or to use bottled water if at all possible.

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, 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. The Drinking Water Bureau will continue to assist the water system and help identify the source of the problem. For more information, call NMED Communications Director Marissa Stone Bardino at (505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475 or the Water System Specialist Diane Barnes at 505-566-9744.

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