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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **The New Mexico Environment Department and The Office of the State Engineer Begin a Drought Public Information Campaign**

*Aims to Provide Useful Tools to Help New Mexicans Save Water.*

(Santa Fe, N.M.) – The New Mexico Environment Department and the Office of the State Engineer announce a new public education campaign aimed at increasing water conservation and reducing water consumption. The campaign will give the average New Mexican simple and easy water saving tips with helpful information to help them use less water.

“The protection of drinking water sources – one of New Mexico’s vital resources in our drought stricken desert climate – is of utmost importance,” said Secretary-Designate Ryan Flynn. “Every New Mexican can do their part to help conserve water to ensure our supplies last us through this drought. Simple steps can lead to major impacts.”

“Small changes can have a big impact on water bills and water loss,” said State Engineer Scott Verhines. “We encourage everyone to reach out to our team to find out how easy it is to use less water.”

The following ten steps provide easy and low- to no-cost ways that every New Mexican can use to conserve water.

1. **Know your water supplier** – check with your water provider for any existing water restrictions. The cities of Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Santa Fe all have water conservation programs with mandatory water use restrictions.

2. **Check for leaks inside the home** – the toilet flapper is the number one fixture that leaks, and a faulty flapper is silent and can go unnoticed. You can find more information at: <http://fixaleaknm.org>
3. **Make sure all your faucets and shower heads are low flow** (2.5 gallons per minute or less).
4. **Limit outdoor irrigation to early morning and late evening** to minimize evaporation. Also check to make sure irrigation systems are working properly, and use only the minimum amount of water that your landscape requires.
5. **Check outdoor plumbing and fixtures for leaks** and promptly repair any if found.
6. **Make sure your swamp cooler is in proper working order** and does not leak.
7. **Take showers instead of baths** and make them short.
8. **Turn off faucets for kitchen and bathroom while doing tasks** instead of running them constantly – use only what you need.
9. **Only run full loads in your washing machine and dishwasher.**
10. Keep your yard beautiful and green with low-water-**use native or adaptive plants** that thrive in our climate and save water. You can find a list at: <http://wuc.ose.state.nm.us/Plants/>

This campaign comes on the heels of several instances where small communities have run out of water. The Villages of Maxwell and Magdalena are two key examples of water-vulnerable communities where water conservation practices can help ease fragile water supplies.

For more information, please visit the New Mexico Environment Department website at [www.nmenv.state.nm.us/drought](http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/drought) and the Office of the State Engineer website at [www.ose.state.nm.us/conservation\\_index.html](http://www.ose.state.nm.us/conservation_index.html).

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