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NMED Lifts “Boil Water Alert” for South Hills Water Company in Bernalillo County

(Santa Fe, NM) –The New Mexico Environment Department’s Drinking Water Bureau advised the South Hills Water Company to lift a “boil water order” for its water system.

NMED issued the order after bacteriological contamination that exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for *E. coli* was discovered in drinking water from the water system. NMED required the South Hills community water system in Bernalillo County to notify its consumers of the finding.

Actions to disinfect the water system and identify possible sources of contamination were promptly taken. These actions included increased chlorination. Consumers were advised to boil all water prior to ingestion.

Water samples collected since the shock chlorination have shown no *E. coli* present in the water system. These clean results have allowed NMED’s Drinking Water Bureau to advise the South Hills Water Company to lift the “boil water order” for its water system.

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.

For more information, call NMED Communications Director Marissa Stone Bardino at (505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475 or Area Manager, Pat Akin at (505) 222-9532.

