



Animas and San Juan Watersheds New Mexico Exposure and Risk Dashboard May 16, 2016

Risk Levels – This dashboard addresses human exposure and risk based on current monitoring data, and will be updated in the future, if necessary, as new data become available.

Safe	Use Caution	Unsafe
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Potential Exposure Pathway	Risk Level	Explanation
Public Drinking Water Supplies		Public drinking water supplies in San Juan County, NM are subject to multiple protective requirements of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), and are safe for all uses. These requirements include infrastructure construction standards, solids settling and treatment, disinfection, testing treated water, and New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) inspections.
Private Domestic Wells		Private domestic wells are not subject to the protective requirements of the federal SDWA. Many private wells were not constructed in a sanitary manner or have deteriorated as the well has aged. These wells are at risk of contamination by bacteria, parasites or viruses. High levels of manganese, iron, sulfate and total dissolved solids existed in some wells prior to the Gold King Mine (GKM) spill. Elevated lead also has been detected in private water systems that have galvanized steel plumbing components or lead solder. Following the GKM spill, NMED tested more than 600 private domestic water wells in San Juan County, NM. There is no evidence that the GKM spill contaminated any water wells in New Mexico. NMED and the New Mexico Bureau of Geology continue to test private domestic wells that may be affected by GKM contaminants in the future.
River Water for Domestic Supply		Untreated river water should never be used for domestic supply, even if there are not visible signs of contamination. When you consume untreated water from surface sources, you run the risk of ingesting harmful bacteria, parasites or viruses. Untreated river water also may contain high levels of lead and arsenic during periods of high turbidity such as when storm events stir up contaminated river sediments.

River Water for Irrigation		River water presently complies with all standards for irrigated agriculture.
Crops		Crops will be tested for heavy metal content by New Mexico State University during the 2016 growing season to ensure that they are safe for consumption by humans and livestock.
River Water for Livestock		River water presently complies with all standards for livestock watering.
Livestock		The New Mexico State Veterinarian, New Mexico Department of Agriculture Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, and local veterinarians are on the alert for any signs of unusual animal distress or illness that could result from GKM contamination.
River and Ditch Sediment		Sediment testing in San Juan County, NM has not identified any contaminant levels that exceed risk-based screening levels for residential exposures. Heavily contaminated sediment, however, exists in Colorado, and has the potential to migrate into New Mexico. Anyone who observes discolored sediment within or near the Animas or San Juan Rivers in New Mexico should notify NMED immediately by calling 1-800-219-6157.
Fish		The “Quality Waters” of the San Juan River below Navajo Lake are located upstream from the confluence with the Animas River and were not affected by the GKM spill. Fish tissue test results in the Animas River, and in the San Juan below the confluence with the Animas, show that heavy metals are within guidelines for human consumption. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish will continue to monitor and test fish to ensure that they remain safe for consumption.
Recreational Activities		Contaminants released by the GKM spill do not presently pose hazards to people enjoying water sports, fishing and other recreational activities in and near the Animas and San Juan Rivers in New Mexico. Both rivers, however, may contain bacteria, parasites or viruses which could pose a health hazard to people who come into contact with river water. It is recommended that people wash thoroughly after going in the river, and avoid swallowing river water when swimming or doing water sports.

For more specific information, please visit www.NMEDRiverWaterSafety.org .