

Gold King Mine Spill - Timeline

- August 5, 2015, 10:30 AM – Approximately one million gallons of acidic and heavy metal contaminated mine sludge was released into the North Fork of the Cement Creek in La Plata County Colorado. A mining team working for the EPA caused the discharge.
- August 6, 2015, 9:30 AM: New Mexico was notified of the spill.
- August 6, 2015, 12: NMED DWB contacted all public water systems and recommended that they consider shutting off the intake and stop taking river water along the Animas River until more information was known. NMED SWQB notified several waste water treatment plants to obtain baseline samples.
- August 7, 2015: NMED Secretary Flynn traveled to Farmington and Durango to investigate the contamination, meet with other officials and hold a press conference.
- August 7, 2015: NMED DWB contacted all affected water systems to see if they had any pH data and to determine the amount of storage each facility had available.
- August 7, 2015: NMED contacted downstream states of Arizona and Utah and Navajo Nation to coordinate sharing of information.
- August 7, 2015: NMED SWQB deployed two staff to the Farmington area to immediately begin surface water sampling prior to the plume arrival.
- August 7, 2015: The plume entered New Mexico.
- August 8, 2015: NMED DWB contacted all affected water systems to check in and recommend they consider conservation measures due to the unknown duration of the event.
- August 8, 2015 9:30 AM: The plume passed the confluence of the San Juan River.
- August 8, 2015 12:00 PM: Governor Martinez, Department Secretary Ryan Flynn and State Engineer Tom Blaine held another meeting in Farmington to address citizen concerns.
- August 9, 2015: NMED DWB contacted all affected water systems to check in and offer assistance.
- August 9, 2015: NMED received EPA test data for the Animas River.
- August 10, 2015: NMED GWQB and EHB began well water testing outside the San Juan County Fair.
- August 10, 2015: Governor Susana Martinez declares Emergency in New Mexico.
- August 11, 2015: DWB Technical Services Manager to meet with affected systems and provide technical assistance and discuss treatment options.
- August 11, 2015: NMED SWQB was successful in getting baseline data at three water quality stations on the Animas and San Juan rivers and posted the preliminary results on the incident website (NMEDRiverWaterSafety.org)
- August 11, 2015: NMED GWQB testing and preliminary data performed at the San Juan County Fair show the specific conductivity for GW to be higher than the river water and therefore it is likely that the that ground water contributes to the river flow and the threat of contamination of wells is less likely

- August 12, 2015: General river hydrology and additional NMED Groundwater and Surface Water samples indicated that it is highly likely that wells have not been affected by this event.
- August 12, 2015:NMED received the second round of data from SWQB sampling from three water quality stations on the Animas and San Juan rivers. All values indicated compliance with surface water standards.
- August 12, 2015:NMED posted an analytic report from CH2MHILL regarding the Animas River post plume sampling done for the City of Farmington.
- August 12, 2015:NMED received surface water sampling data from EPA that indicated trending toward normal conditions.
- August 12, 2015:A preliminary EPA sediment sample for one location showed all pollutants below screening levels.