

**SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR**

Butch Tongate, Cabinet Secretary

J.C. Borrego, Deputy Secretary

NEWS RELEASE*For Immediate Release***January 20, 2016***The Environment Department's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.*

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Safe Drinking Water Service Restored at Questa *NMED Cites Successful Water Quality Test Results*

Santa Fe—The Village of Questa in Taos County lifted their drinking water system's precautionary boil water advisory on Tuesday to restore water service for nearly 2,000 residents. Staff from the New Mexico Environment Department's Drinking Water Bureau (DWB) worked with the Village of Questa throughout the recent water emergency to ensure the protection of public health. The precautionary advisory was first issued on December 7, 2016 to ensure drinking water safety after Questa's well production problems and distribution system pressure issues were detected.

The advisory was a precautionary measure taken by Questa, with concurrence from the state's Environment Department, due to the potential for contamination from leaks and low pressure, even though no contamination had been detected. Questa's water consumers were advised to boil the water before drinking, cooking, dishwashing and bathing. Backup water supplies were planned for staging at the local school, in the event of an extended water outage. The Village of Questa, however, quickly drilled a new well and worked closely with Environment's Drinking Water Bureau engineers to ensure that the new well met structural and public health protection standards for the source supply of drinking water, eliminating the need for the backup water supply.

Questa's water system operators were also able to locate and address various leaks and failing apertures on the drinking water distribution system that were contributing to the loss of pressure. The New Mexico Environment Department's close oversight of the Village of Questa's water system will continue.

Environment Secretary Butch Tongate reminded all New Mexico water system operators that, "This is an important reminder for all public water systems to monitor their drinking water supplies continuously and closely, and to maintain and implement up-to-date Operations and Maintenance Manuals and Emergency Response Plans so that they are prepared for unexpected situations such as the one Questa faced and resolved."

Teamwork between New Mexico's Office of the State Engineer, Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Environment Department, the Village of Questa, Red River, and other community members were essential for the safe handling and resolution of this situation.

(more)

For more information, please email or call Wayne Jeffs, Drinking Water Bureau Compliance Officer:
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For your Facebook Feed: Safe Drinking Water Service Restored at Questa-NMED Cites Successful Water Quality Test Results. The Village of Questa in Taos County lifted their drinking water system's precautionary boil water advisory on Wednesday. Staff from the New Mexico Environment Department's Drinking Water Bureau (DWB) worked with the Village of Questa throughout the recent water emergency to ensure the protection of public health. Environment Secretary Butch Tongate reminded all New Mexico water system operators that, "This is an important reminder for all public water systems to monitor their drinking water supplies continuously and closely, and to maintain and implement up-to-date Operations and Maintenance Manuals and Emergency Response Plans so that they are prepared for unexpected situations such as the one Questa faced." #NM, #NMED #Water

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