

# HB 92: Safe Drinking Water Testing Fund



*The Safe Drinking Water Testing Fund protects 1.9 million New Mexicans who rely on public drinking water from over 1,000 water systems and eases the burden of paying for water quality testing - especially for small systems.*

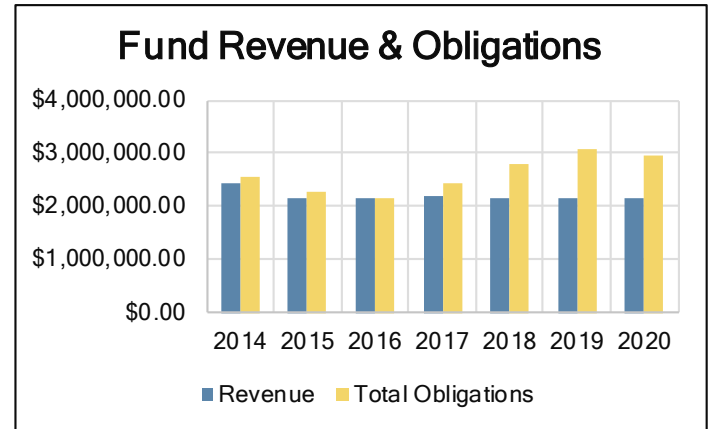
## How does it work?

The Safe Drinking Water Testing Fund (commonly known as the Water Conservation Fund) was established by legislation in 1993, allowing public water systems to be charged a fee of \$0.03 per thousand gallons of drinking water produced. NMED is proposing to increase the fee from \$0.03 to \$0.05 to meet the growing costs of drinking water sampling and laboratory testing and continue supporting water systems. The fee increase renders big benefits while increasing utility bills for the average household by only 40 cents per month.

NMED uses this fund to:

- Pay for the testing of required drinking water compliance samples from public water systems.
- Identify opportunities to reduce or eliminate costly sampling for contaminants that are not present in New Mexico, while continuing to ensure that drinking water meets all regulatory standards.

In recent years, fund revenue has remained flat as the operating costs of the program have steadily increased with natural inflation. If the fee stays the same, the Fund could be depleted by June 2022 and NMED will have to reduce testing services, shifting those costs to local water utilities.



## How HB 92 benefits New Mexico



### Public Health

- ✓ Ensures critical drinking water sampling is conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements
- ✓ Ensures water provided to New Mexicans by regulated public water systems is tested on a regular schedule
- ✓ Identification of potentially unhealthy water contaminants like *E.coli* and nitrates
- ✓ Helps to ensure New Mexico's drinking water is compliant with state and federal regulations



### Economy

- ✓ Provides low-cost sampling and analytical services for all water systems, a benefit especially for small water systems that serve fewer than 1,000 people
- ✓ Allows small community water systems to spend limited financial resources on operations rather than hiring certified samplers
- ✓ Supports 20+ local laboratories that are certified and contracted to analyze samples for compliance



### Environment

- ✓ Allows for the identification of contamination affecting New Mexico drinking water sources
- ✓ Reduces mobile air emissions by conducting larger volumes of sampling events with fewer samplers and trips to the laboratory
- ✓ Provides consistent drinking water contaminant data that can be used by water systems to make better-informed decisions for source water protection

*Sponsors: Rep. Doreen Gallegos, Rep. Susan Herrera, Sen. George Muñoz*

