

**MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR**

James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary

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.

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

December 13, 2021

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Environment Department Releases Annual Report for Drinking Water Testing Fund

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) released the annual Water Conservation Fund (WCF) report that offers the public, stakeholders, and legislators the opportunity to track the solvency of this important drinking water fund.

The WCF was established by legislation in 1993 and charges public water systems a fee of \$0.03 per thousand gallons of drinking water produced. The New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department (TRD) manages fee collection and deposits those fees into the WCF. NMED administers expenditures from the WCF and provides sampling and laboratory analytical services to public water systems. These funds are used to ensure that approximately 1,005 public water systems across New Mexico provide safe, clean drinking water to our communities.

NMED's implementation of the WCF testing program ensures critical drinking water sampling is conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements and on a regular schedule, which supports local compliance with state and federal public health standards. This fund is especially important to our state's small and rural communities who rely on these funds to pay for critical drinking water quality sample collection and analysis.

The FY 2021 WCF Annual Report is now available. With this report, NMED is rolling out a new format for routine annual summaries of WCF revenue and expenditures.

"The Environment Department continues to embrace transparency as part of its mission and operations," said NMED Cabinet Secretary James Kenney. "Administration of drinking water testing through a long-standing partnership between NMED and local public water utilities, the Taxation and Revenue Department, and state and private laboratories is a crucial component of our efforts to ensure a safe and reliable public water supply for New Mexicans."

"New Mexico Municipal League Environmental Quality Association appreciates the NMED's work to ensure accountability and long-term solvency of the Water Conservation Fund, said Maria Gilvarry, President of the Association. "The Association looks forward to working with the NMED in the use of this report to assess areas for savings and streamlining and to ensure all PWS are able to meet the requirement of the Safe Drinking Water Act."

"The Water Conservation Fund Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2021 highlights the valuable service this Fund provides to community water systems across the State of New Mexico," said Bill Connor, Executive

Director of the New Mexico Rural Water Association. “The short-term viability and long-term sustainability of the Fund is imperative to help ensure that the citizens of New Mexico continue to have access to safe clean drinking water. Without the Water Conservation Fund, many systems, principally small and underserved water systems, would struggle to afford the increasing costs of the growing number of water tests required to ensure safe clean drinking water is being supplied by New Mexico's public water systems.”

In FY 2021, the overall expenditure from the WCF totaled \$2,632,787. The majority of those expenditures (94%) provided a direct benefit to the public water systems by relieving them of sampling costs and laboratory analytical costs. Additional highlights from FY 2021 described in the report include:

- For the first time since FY 2016, WCF revenues exceeded expenses during FY 2021.
- WCF expenses for FY 2021 were approximately \$2.6 million dollars, slightly lower than previous years expenses.
- During FY 2021, the WCF paid for the analysis of approximately 63,000 drinking water samples. Those samples and the subsequent results provide essential public health data to over 1,000 public water systems and their consumers.

To read the FY 2021 WCF Annual Report, visit the Agency’s website [here](#).

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