

**MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR**

James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary

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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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Environment Department releases quarterly performance report highlighting accomplishments, resource challenges

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) released the second-quarter update of its fiscal year 2023 (FY23) performance assessment report that offers the public, stakeholders, and legislators the opportunity to track the department's progress in protecting public health and the environment. The report also provides insights on budget and staffing challenges impacting performance.

Accomplishments highlighted in the report include the launch of the New Mexico Environmental Crimes Task Force, awarding \$800,000 to communities for recycling and illegal dump site projects, responding to an asphalt spill in the Gila National Forest, a positive recommendation for the Western Interstate Hydrogen Hub concept Paper, and hosting the one-year anniversary meeting of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. The report also covers the hands-on staff training for hazardous waste operations and emergency response standards (HAZWOPER), and favorable public health outcomes including 99.9% of New Mexicans breathing clean air and 90.5% of New Mexicans drinking clean water. The report also details \$4.9 million invested in water infrastructure projects.

In FY23, NMED received appropriations totaling \$114.0 million to protect public health and the environment. This included \$20.3 million in general funds, \$57.4 million in special revenue funds (e.g., permit fees), \$36.3 million in federal funds, and \$1.9 million in special appropriations for earmarked projects/purposes.

The second quarter report, developed by NMED's Office of Strategic Initiatives, covers the period from October 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022. The second quarter installment reports on 46 performance measures over five broad categories for FY23 as follows:

- 6 public health measures,
- 9 environmental protection measures,
- 24 compliance measures,
- 4 economic investment measures, and
- 3 operational measures.

The report also provides a retrospective look at the second quarter while providing insights for the rest of the fiscal year.

Despite resource shortages, and each technical staff person overseeing 126 projects, our Construction Programs Bureau initiated 38 new water infrastructure projects across the state, disbursing almost \$5 million dollars into communities with water infrastructure needs in the last quarter.

While the 46 performance measures largely stem from agreements between NMED and the Legislative Finance Committee for state fiscal year 2023, the NMED uses these reports to provide other information to the public, stakeholders and legislature.

Highlights from the second quarterly report of FY23 include:

- 99.9% of New Mexicans breathed clean air.
- 90.5% of New Mexicans drank safe drinking water.
- NMED staff conducted 2,043 compliance inspections across the state.
- For inspections conducted during the second quarter of FY23, four programs found compliance exceeding the benchmark compliance of 85% while four regulatory program areas fell below the target:
 - Solid and infectious waste management facilities: 100% in compliance
 - Groundwater discharge permittees: 100% in compliance
 - Liquid waste program (i.e., septic systems): 99.8% in compliance
 - Radiation licensing program (i.e., medical equipment): 96.9% in compliance
 - Restaurants and food manufacturers: 75.7% in compliance
 - Air emitting sources: 60.0% in compliance
 - Surface water discharge permittees: 50.0% in compliance
 - Hazardous waste management facilities: 10.3% in compliance
- NMED Drinking Water Bureau staff provided direct technical assistance to 12 community water systems to help them move from a status of non-compliance to compliance.
- The report includes a new “NMED Staff Workload Snapshot” and supporting data in Appendix A that provide insight into the workload challenges facing an under-resourced agency. For example, at current staffing levels it would take it would take NMED air quality inspectors 6.5 years to visit all currently permitted air emitting sources across the state.
- NMED’s vacancy rate during this period was approximately 20.6%.
- Exit interview data shows employees leave NMED for private/public sector opportunities with greater compensation; greater earning potential for less complex work at other state agencies; frustration over lack of compensation related to the volume, pace, and complexity of work; and retirements.

View the FY23 Q2 Performance Assessment [here](#).

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