



NEWS RELEASE

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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, community investments

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) released the first quarter (Q1) performance assessment report for fiscal year 2024 (FY24) that offers the public, stakeholders, and legislators the opportunity to track the department's progress in protecting public health and the environment between July 1 and September 30, 2023. The report also provides insights on budget and staffing challenges impacting performance.

First quarter accomplishments highlighted in the report include:

- Submitting Advanced Clean Cars and Advanced Clean Trucks rules to the Environmental Improvement Board;
- Offering free water well testing in Clovis, Mountainair, and Lamy;
- Initiating 567 enforcement actions and resolving 79 others;
- Citing Advanced Chemical Treatment, LLC and assessing a civil penalty of \$ 745,000 for alleged violations of their operating permit including the storage of hazardous waste outside of designated areas, improperly recorded facility inspections, inaccurate waste reporting, and not sufficiently characterizing hazardous wastes accepted by the facility; and
- Issuing over \$1 million in citations to the City of Albuquerque and Consolidated Builders of New Mexico, LLC for exposing workers to asbestos at the Gateway Center.

NMED also completed 2,698 compliance inspections in Q1 and hired over 30 new staff during a Rapid Hire Event in September.

For FY24, NMED received recurring appropriations totaling \$147.7 million to protect public health and the environment. This included \$25.5 million in general funds, \$62.7 million in special revenue funds (e.g., permit fees), and \$59.5 million in federal funds. NMED also received \$45.5 million in one-time appropriations for earmarked projects/purposes.

The performance report, developed by NMED's Office of Strategic Initiatives, provides data on 46 performance measures over five broad categories for FY24 as follows:

- 6 public health measures,
- 9 environmental protection measures,
- 24 compliance measures,

- 4 economic investment measures, and
- 3 operational measures.

The 46 performance measures largely stem from agreements between NMED and the Department of Finance and Administration and the Legislative Finance Committee for state fiscal year 2024 pursuant to the Accountability in Government Act. NMED uses these reports to provide additional context and information to the public and the legislature.

Highlights from the report indicate:

- 98.3% of New Mexicans breathed clean air.
- 90.1% of New Mexicans drank safe drinking water.
- NMED staff conducted 2,698 compliance inspections across the state.
- For the inspections conducted, five programs found compliance exceeding their benchmark while three regulatory program areas fell below the target:
 - Surface water discharge permittees: 100% in compliance
 - Groundwater discharge permittees: 97.5% in compliance
 - Liquid waste program (i.e., septic systems): 95.8% in compliance
 - Radiation licensing program (i.e., medical equipment): 94.8% in compliance
 - Solid and infectious waste management facilities: 90.9% in compliance.
 - Restaurants and food manufacturers: 73.4% in compliance
 - Hazardous waste management facilities: 60.0% in compliance
 - Air emitting sources: 50.0% in compliance
- NMED Drinking Water Bureau staff provided direct technical assistance to 16 community water systems to help them move from a status of non-compliance to compliance.

The report includes an “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, each NMED Occupational Health and Safety inspector has an average of 6,804 facilities to regulate. If each one inspected a facility every workday, it would take this team 29 years to visit each site.

Each technical staff member in the Construction Programs Bureau (CPB) oversees 149 individual projects. Despite this workload, CPB still initiated 65 new water infrastructure projects across the state in the first quarter, disbursing \$16.7 million into communities with water infrastructure needs.

NMED’s vacancy rate during this period was approximately 21.2% in the last quarter. Based on exit interview data and the Department’s annual employee engagement surveys, NMED’s vacancies are driven by opportunities for greater compensation with less complex work and retirements.

View the FY24 Q1 Performance Assessment [here](#)

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