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NEWS RELEASE

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Environment Department Reinforces On-Going “Boil Water Advisory” for Chippeway Water Users Association

Customers are urged to Boil Water Prior to Drinking

(Santa Fe, N.M.) –The New Mexico Environment Department’s Drinking Water Bureau is reminding water users that a long standing “boil water advisory” for the Chippeway Water Users Association Water System is still in place.

On December 12, 2013 Bacteriological contamination (*E. coli*) was detected and confirmed in a drinking water sample collected from spring #2 that supplies water to the system. This sample result is the latest of several samples collected from the source to have the presence of *E. coli*. On September 21, 2010, NMED originally required the Chippeway Water Users Association Water System to notify consumers of their water system of the boil water advisory for source water fecal contamination. Chippeway is still under this advisory and is required to inform the water users of the contamination. Chippeway Water Users Association Water System serves approximately 30 residents located south of Cloudcroft, NM in Otero County.

This advisory only applies to the drinking water from the Chippeway Water Users Association Water System, and does not extend to any other surrounding water systems.

Consumers of the Chippeway Water Users Association Water System are advised to boil the water for five minutes before drinking, cooking, dishwashing and bathing. The presence of *E. coli* in water indicates that the water may have been in contact with sewage or animal wastes, and could contain disease-causing organisms. Most strains of *E. coli* are harmless and live in the intestines of healthy humans and animals. However, a positive test for *E. coli* in the drinking water supply may indicate the presence of dangerous strains of *E. coli* or other disease-causing organisms. These types of organisms may cause severe gastrointestinal illness and, in rare cases, death. Children, the elderly and immuno-compromised individuals are at an increased risk for illness.

The NMED Drinking Water Bureau will provide technical assistance to the water system and Chippeway Water Users Association Water System will continue to test the water until no further threat of contamination remains.

For more information, call NMED Communications Director Jim Winchester at (505) 231-8800 or Ray Melendrez, Drinking Water Bureau Area Supervisor, at (575) 647-7955.

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