



STATE OF NEW MEXICO

Environment Department

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR

James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary

NEWS RELEASE For Immediate Release

January 23, 2026

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.

Contact: Drew Goretzka, Director of Communications
New Mexico Environment Department
505.670.8911 | drew.goretzka@env.nm.gov

NMED launches satellite-based leak detection program Technology to save rural systems thousands of gallons in lost water

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Environment Department today launched LeakTracer, an innovative satellite-based leak detection program that will help rural communities quickly identify and repair leaks in drinking water systems.

Through a partnership with contractors ASTERRA and McKim & Creed, LeakTracer uses L-band synthetic aperture radar satellite data and artificial intelligence to proactively detect leaks in rural water systems. Once identified, on-site crews can quickly make repairs — saving thousands of gallons of water and potentially millions of dollars in lost water over time.

“LeakTracer is a game-changer for New Mexico’s rural drinking water systems, leveraging advanced technology to protect our state’s most critical resource,” said **Environment Secretary James Kenney**. “Guided by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham’s 50-Year Water Action Plan, this program shows how New Mexico is proactively addressing climate impacts that threaten our water security.”

In some New Mexico water systems, 40% to 70% of treated water is lost, primarily because of aging infrastructure. These leaks are often difficult to locate and repair, especially in small, rural communities with limited staff and financial resources.

Rural water systems serving fewer than 20,000 people and in good standing with the Rural Infrastructure Loan Program are eligible to participate in LeakTracer. The satellite-based, AI-powered leak detection service is provided at no cost to participating systems. Systems are responsible only for repair costs if leaks are identified.

LeakTracer has already proven effective in five New Mexico communities. A pilot program identified more than 78 verified leaks and saved an estimated 345,000 gallons of water per day during the first half of 2025.

For more information on LeakTracer or to apply, visit NMED's LeakTracer webpage at <https://www.env.nm.gov/leaktracer/>. In addition, those interested in the program can call the LeakTracer hotline at (505) 841-LEAK.

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