



## **NEWS RELEASE** **For Immediate 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.*

### **NMED to clean up PFAS-contaminated groundwater at dairies** *Agreements mark first step toward full remediation near Cannon AFB*

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Environment Department has entered into four agreements with Curry County dairies to investigate and remediate groundwater contaminated by toxic PFAS from Cannon Air Force Base.

The agreements mark a significant step toward full remediation of a four-mile toxic PFAS plume caused by firefighting foam at Cannon Air Force Base. The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) is leading this initiative — funding the effort and seeking reimbursement from the United States Air Force.

“We have stood in solidarity with our dairy industry since the toxic PFAS contamination was discovered in their water, land, herds, workers, and family members,” said **Environment Secretary James Kenney**. “Through our partnership, we will learn how to manage and treat the toxic PFAS contamination under Curry County that will remain unaddressed by the U.S. Air Force until 2032 or later.”

At a January 2026 public meeting held by the U.S. Air Force, NMED offered to lead the cleanup of contamination outside of the military base and asked the U.S. Air Force to fund the initiative. [NMED sent a letter](#) to the U.S. Air Force on January 28 reiterating the state’s proposal.

The U.S. Air Force has yet to respond to this offer, citing its ongoing lawsuit against the State of New Mexico, and signaling the federal government has no intention to partner with NMED or the landowners in the near future to clean up the toxic PFAS contamination the U.S. Air Force released into the environment.

As a result of the contamination, Highland Dairy — a family-run farm in Curry County — was compelled to euthanize more than 3,600 dairy cows that were poisoned by PFAS.

Today’s announcement is the latest in multiple state initiatives to relieve and protect Curry County residents from the toxic PFAS contamination caused by the U.S. Air Force. In response

to the contamination, NMED has launched a battery of programs, tests and products to remediate the damage to nearby residents.

In Fall 2024, NMED launched the New Mexico PFAS Blood Testing Program, offering free blood testing to adults who lived or worked near Cannon Air Force Base. The program helped residents understand their personal exposure and gives health care providers better information to support patients. NMED's final report found that 99.7% of the 628 participants had PFOS — a form of PFAS widely used in military and airport firefighting foam — in their blood.

In October 2025, the New Mexico Legislature approved a \$12 million appropriation to extend the area's public drinking water system east of Cannon Air Force Base, connecting nearby private well owners affected by the PFAS plume and delivering safe drinking water.

In December 2025, NMED began installing free water filters for private well owners in the plume area, with 47 filters installed as of March 6, 2026.

The plume is currently the subject of multiple lawsuits seeking to hold the U.S. Department of Defense accountable. To date, NMED has spent more than \$12 million in legal and technical costs on the lawsuits.

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