

**SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR**Butch Tongate, *Cabinet Secretary*J.C. Borrego, *Acting Deputy Secretary***NEWS RELEASE****October 11, 2016**

**Contact:** Allison Scott Majure, Communications Director  
New Mexico Environment Department  
505.231.8800 | [allison.majure@state.nm.us](mailto:allison.majure@state.nm.us)

*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.*

## **New Mexico Environment Department Concludes Investigation of Morningstar Water Supply and Fines Additional \$162,000**

*Investigation Launched in June Examined Accuracy of Reported Turbidity Data*

**Santa Fe, NM** — Today, the New Mexico Environment Department announced the finalization of their investigation into Animas Valley Water's Morningstar Water Supply System launched in June when the Environment Department's inspection revealed significant deficiencies and ordered the system to issue a Boil Water Advisory to their 6,423 customers.

The investigation included collection and analysis of primary turbidity data, reported turbidity data, personal interviews, and record reviews revealing a mismatch between the [Morningstar turbidity data reported regularly to the Environment Department](#) and the [Morningstar turbidity data collected by turbidometer](#) at the water system itself. Turbidity is used to assess drinking water quality. The more turbid the water, the harder it is to disinfect.

"It's high time for AV Water and Morningstar to be accountable for the system's problems. New Mexicans affected by this unsettling situation deserve much better," said Acting Deputy Environment Secretary J.C. Borrego. The New Mexico Environment Department investigated a variety of issues at Morningstar since early June when first learning of Morningstar's 28 significant deficiencies from the comprehensive inspection of the system. At that time, Environment acted immediately with protective measures for the public such as the mandate for the Boil Water Advisory.

"Emergency Orders, Administrative Compliance Orders with penalties, and even NMED's [drinking water safety website](#), which was developed to address Morningstar's problematic customer communications, have been critical to spurring progress and enforcing our regulations," said Borrego.

As a result of the investigation begun last June, and in addition to oversight and protective measures, NMED issued a new [Administrative Compliance Order today for \\$162,000](#) related to Morningstar's inaccurate reporting of turbidity data.

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