STATE OF NEW MEXICO
Environment Department

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR
James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary

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.

Contact: Jorge Estrada, Public Relations Coordinator
New Mexico Environment Department
505.690.5326 | jorge.estrada@env.nm.gov

Free well water testing available to Cibola County residents

CIBOLA COUNTY – Grants residents who rely on private wells for drinking water can get their water tested for free this Saturday, October 3, at a one-day public health event.

The New Mexico Environment Department and the New Mexico Department of Health are hosting the water testing event from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Grants Farmer's Market at 700 W Santa Fe Ave, Grants, NM 87020. Testing is free to the first 100 participants. Well water tests typically cost about $150.

High nitrate levels can pose serious health risks, especially for pregnant women and infants. These contaminants may be naturally occurring or result from sources including fertilizer, animal waste, and septic tanks. Testing also measures other key indicators of safety: pH, specific conductance, iron, sulfate, fluoride, and arsenic.

"We're offering free water testing to help private well owners who may have questions about their water quality better understand what's in their household drinking water," said **Ground Water Quality Bureau Chief Justin Ball.** "For people who rely on a private well, testing your water is one of the easiest things you can do to look out for your family's health."

Residents must bring their own water samples to the event. How to collect your sample:

- Let the water run for two to three minutes before collecting the sample.
- Fill a clean, odor-free glass or plastic container with at least a quart of well water.
- If the home has a whole-house filtration system, collect the water at the well head prior to any filtration or softener systems, if possible.
- Fill the container with water as close to the time of testing as possible.

Residents should also bring basic information about their well, including depth, depth to water, latitude and longitude, and distance from the well to the nearest septic tank or leach field system.

Well owners who cannot attend may send a water sample with a family member or neighbor. Containers must be clearly labeled with the owner's name, phone number, address, and well information. Only water that comes from homes that rely on private wells for drinking water will be accepted. Test results will be mailed to participating households following the event

within two to three weeks.

Since 2022, NMED has tested more than 1,000 private drinking water wells at 38 water fairs, providing $149,550 in value to New Mexico communities. NMED tracks its investments in communities as part of its performance measures and target of investing $65 million throughout the state in fiscal year 2025.

Water from public water systems (such as local water utilities) is tested periodically, and results are available on the Drinking Water Watch website.

For more information about upcoming water fairs, please visit NMED's event calendar or call (505) 827-2900.

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