

**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.*

**Free well water testing available to Ruidoso residents**

LINCOLN COUNTY – Ruidoso residents who rely on private wells for drinking water can get their water tested free of charge this Saturday, March 28, through a joint event hosted by the New Mexico Environment Department and the New Mexico Department of Health.

Testing will be available from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., at 2917 Sudderth Drive, Ruidoso, NM 88345. The event is free to the first 100 participants, or while supplies last. Well water tests typically cost about \$150.

Residents must bring their own water samples to the event.

Well water tests typically cost about \$150 but will be free to the first 100 participants or while supplies last. Participants must bring their water sample to the event for it to be tested. Test results will be mailed to participating households following the event within two to three weeks.

“Private well owners in Lincoln County can come to this water fair and find out more about the quality of their household drinking water,” said **Ground Water Quality Bureau Chief Justin Ball**. “With just one test, families can gain the confidence they need to keep their water safe for years to come.”

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 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 also should bring basic information about their well, including depth, depth to water, well casing material (such as steel or PVC), 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.

The state's water testing programs—known as “water fairs”—provide an opportunity for well owners to measure pH and nitrate levels -- measurements that are crucial to maintaining safe drinking water. These contaminants may be naturally occurring or result from sources including fertilizer, animal waste and septic tanks. High nitrate levels can be dangerous to pregnant women and infants. [Learn more about the water fair program.](#)

Since fiscal year 2022, NMED has tested more than 800 private drinking water wells at 34 water fairs, providing \$123,000 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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