



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

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EPA Announces the New Mexico Environment Department to Receive \$18.9 Million to Detect and Address PFAS and other Emerging Contaminants

DALLAS, TEXAS (May 23, 2024) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is announcing the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) will receive \$18,900,000 to assess the extent of emerging contaminants such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in public water systems and disadvantaged communities and implement measures to protect communities from these dangerous chemicals. The funding comes from President Biden’s historic Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which has addressed significant pollution issues across the nation.

“Clean, safe drinking water is something every person in New Mexico deserves,” **said Regional Administrator Dr. Earthea Nance.** “With this funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the New Mexico Environment Department will be able to take crucial steps to safeguard New Mexico’s drinking water from PFAS and other emerging contaminants.”

"Contamination and pollution from forever chemicals like PFAS threaten clean drinking water supplies that New Mexico communities depend upon. I am proud to welcome \$18.9 million that we secured through the Infrastructure Law to ramp up New Mexico's urgent efforts to detect pollution and protect our precious water resources from PFAS and other emerging contaminants," **said U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich.**

“I’m proud to welcome this pivotal investment of more than \$18 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help New Mexico communities safeguard themselves from PFAS,” **said U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján.** “This funding will help examine PFAS levels across the state and implement remediation and mitigation methods to help protect New Mexico's public water system while helping educate New Mexicans on the public health and environmental risks that these chemicals cause.”

“Combating per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as forever chemicals or PFAS, in our public water systems is essential to provide safe water for communities in New Mexico,” **said Rep. Melanie Stansbury (NM-01).** “Under the Biden Administration, the EPA is working quickly to end the decades of destructive, and sometimes, deadly practices by corporate polluters, and the \$18.9 million coming to our state will continue the progress of cleaning up our water systems. New Mexicans know water is life, and they

also know the state's Democratic leaders are dedicated to cleaning the water supply for generations to come.”

“When clean water flows, New Mexico grows,” **said Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (NM-03)**. “This \$18.9 million EPA award is an investment in the health and safety of New Mexico’s residents. The testing and engineering for PFAS remediation were exactly the kind of projects we envisioned when we passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The Biden Administration knows these projects are essential to protect clean water in our state and help communities who need it most.”

NMED will perform sampling of public water systems to assess the extent of PFAS contamination throughout the state. During the sampling process, which the NMED anticipates will take two years to complete, the state will evaluate communities to determine which areas need critical assistance. The NMED will also plan and coordinate outreach efforts for communities during this time. Remediation and mitigation efforts will begin once sampling and evaluation is complete, with an emphasis on small and disadvantaged communities.

This funding has a lifespan of five years, with the opportunity for additional funding throughout this time. The five-year workplan includes the identification of PFAS and other emerging contaminants in public water systems, removing all hazardous substances from drinking water sources, and educating communities on how emerging contaminants threaten public health and the environment. The final phase of this funding will be the implementation of plans that assist water systems in maintaining clean water compliance and building resiliency for long-term sustainability.

PFAS are a group of manufactured chemicals that have been used in industry and consumer products since the 1940s. Exposure to certain PFAS over a long period of time pose a significant public health risk. The economic and environmental impact of PFAS has already been felt in New Mexico and continues to have an impact nationwide. Through some preliminary testing PFAS has been detected in multiple locations across the state. This funding will allow for more research into the presence of PFAS and other contaminants in source and drinking water.

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