

## Test results show NMSU water is clean

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LAS CRUCES — Concerns in June about the potential of coliform bacteria in the water system on the New Mexico State University main campus have turned out to be unfounded.

Ricardo Jacquez, District III area manager for the New Mexico Environment Department, in Las Cruces, said Thursday eight sample tests taken in June, immediately after two of 25 water samples tested positive for coliform bacteria, showed no problems with NMSU's drinking water.

"New Mexico State University went beyond the minimum state requirement of providing six repeat samples," Jacquez said. "All of them showed the water is safe to drink."

A notice was sent to users of NMSU's water system in June after two water samples indicated coliform. According to state requirements, no more than one sample taken can test positive for the bacteria. Jacquez said NMSU complied with state law by providing public notice.

The two positive samples were taken at the New Mexico Department of Agriculture and Vista del Monte apartments, on the NMSU campus.

David Bollschweiler, a civil engineer for NMSU's Office of Facilities and Services, said the repeat tests were taken immediately upstream and downstream of the two campus sites.

"All of those tests came back negative," Bollschweiler said. "That was good evidence to us that the two bad samples may have happened during the transportation, the handling of the water samples to the lab."

Bollschweiler said coliform is naturally present in the environment and is harmless. However, it can indicate that other potentially harmful bacteria may be present. Irene Montoya, who lives near the Vista del Monte apartments, said she was not aware of anyone becoming ill or overly concerned about the water supply.

"I saw the notice the university sent out and noted that it said that no one had to boil water or anything else like that," Montoya said. "I think everybody else just went about their own business. It's good to know, though, that everything's OK now."

As required by state law, NMSU will continue to conduct monthly water samples and submit results to the state Environment Department. Steve Ramirez can be reached at [sramirez@lcsun-news.com](mailto:sramirez@lcsun-news.com)

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