



NEWS RELEASE

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NMED Investigation Request

The Camino Real Regional Utility Authority (CRRUA) has learned of a request by New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Cabinet Secretary James C. Kenney that the New Mexico Department of Justice (NMDOJ) and the New Mexico Office of State Auditor (NMOSA) investigate CRRUA.

In December 2023, NMED reported the results of its 2023 Sanitary Survey of CRRUA. In its survey, NMED identified 58 deficiencies. CRRUA's executive director at the time departed CRRUA that same month.

In January 2024, the CRRUA board of directors named Juan Carlos Crosby interim executive director. Crosby immediately began addressing the deficiencies.

NMED's top four priorities were the proper operation of CRRUA's four arsenic treatment facilities; arsenic levels in the drinking water to be within the EPA maximum contaminate level (MCL) of 10 parts per billion (ppb); the training of plant operators; and to routinely check and document the calibration of all chemical addition pumps. CRRUA worked hard and quickly to address the deficiencies. All arsenic treatment facilities are operational and initial corrections have been made with some associated tasks still pending. Currently, arsenic samples taken at all four of CRRUA's treatment facilities are below 10 ppb. Throughout the process of addressing deficiencies, CRRUA is fully cooperating with NMED.

The CRRUA board has approved additional improvements including replacing the filter media in two of the four arsenic treatment facilities for improved performance; physical upgrades to three water wells to reduce the possibility of failure during peak usage; and monitoring all water wells on SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) by computer/phone and receive instant alarm notifications. CRRUA is also developing plans to rehabilitate and/or replace the remainder of its aging infrastructure.

To track its progress in correcting the NMED identified deficiencies, CRRUA created a progress checklist in English and Spanish of NMED mandated corrections and within weeks achieved 56% compliance. The progress checklist will be updated as corrections are made and can be viewed online at <https://www.crrua.org/> and at <https://www.facebook.com/crruainfo>

In addition to improving plant operations, CRRUA expanded communication with the public by increasing its online and social media content. It also created a YouTube channel www.youtube.com/@crrua_info to host informational videos CRRUA produces. The first video is an inside look at the arsenic removal process at one of CRRUA's treatment facilities.

“We’re proud of our achievements and ongoing improvements at CRRUA since the new administration began in January,” said board chair Susana Chaparro. “This is a perfect opportunity for our state and federal elected officials to help our constituents by supporting CRRUA’s efforts in spirit and with funding,” Chaparro said.

“We at CRRUA face ongoing criticism and negativity and understand that customers are sometimes unhappy and frustrated. But I want to assure them that we have made many improvements and continue to move forward in providing reliable service and quality water,” said Crosby. “What we were handed did not occur overnight and cannot be fixed overnight. But we continue to achieve positive results and we thank our customers for their patience and understanding.”

Chaparro and Crosby said CRRUA will fully cooperate with any investigation to the greatest extent possible.