

CRRUA Customer Message

05/30/2024

Third-Party Evaluation Site Visit of CRRUA Completed

The firm contracted by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) to perform a Comprehensive Performance Evaluation (CPE) of the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority (CRRUA) completed its site visit today.

The evaluation team of Janet Cherry and Tom Brown, engineers with Eastern Research Group (ERG,) spent two-and-a-half days inspecting CRRUA's four arsenic treatment facilities and interviewing CRRUA staff.

Cherry emphasized that the CPE is not an audit, but a process to identify Performance Limiting Factors (PLF) that can hinder CRRUA's abilities to achieve optimized performance. Once a prioritized list of factors is identified, CRRUA staff can initiate corrective actions.

During visits to the arsenic treatment facilities, the ERG evaluation team (team) took independent water samples for both pH and chlorine residuals. All samples were in alignment with the values recorded by CRRUA's instrumentation.

Arsenic samples using CRRUA's portable arsenic analysis kit (PAAK) indicated that all treated water was below the federal limit of 10 parts per billion (ppb) at each of the four arsenic treatment facilities. CRRUA conducts voluntary arsenic tests three times weekly using the PAAK as part of its standard operating procedure. CRRUA also sends water samples to an NMED certified water testing lab every two weeks as a self-governance practice to verify arsenic levels meet EPA standards. NMED conducts its own quarterly arsenic water sample tests.

Cherry said the team reviewed daily log sheets and found the information gathered was "outstanding." She also mentioned that constraints facing CRRUA include limited revenues associated with the current rate structure. According to NMED data for water rates, CRRUA is 50% below the statewide average. She said other areas requiring immediate attention are the filling of vacant positions with qualified staff and formalizing administrative policies.

The team examined CRRUA's administrative practices, plant operations, standard operating procedures, recordkeeping, staff training and finances.

In a concluding comment, Cherry complimented the CRRUA board of directors and staff for doing what she called, "a great job." However, she emphasized that NMED and CRRUA jointly develop a task list with measurable outcomes to address the performance limiting factors. NMED said it can provide non-financial resources to assist CRRUA in the form of training, validating data and professional expertise.

Cherry said the final report should take approximately 45 days to complete. It will be submitted to NMED for review then presented to the CRRUA board at a regular meeting.

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Photo outlines

[Photo #1](#): Evaluation team members Tom Brown and Janet Cherry with ERG review daily log sheets at the Sunland Park Arsenic Treatment Facility.

[Photo #2](#): ERG engineer Tom Brown takes a water sample for arsenic testing at the Sunland Park Arsenic Treatment Facility. The sample was below the federal limit of 10 parts per billion (ppb.)

[Photo #3](#): Tom Brown and Janet Cherry (left) with ERG discuss operating procedures with members of CRRUA staff at the Sunland Park Arsenic Treatment Facility.