

**MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR**

James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary

**NEWS RELEASE***For Immediate Release***Sept. 1, 2022***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.*

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**New report tracks Environment Department's Fiscal Year 2022 performance in protecting public health, environment**

**SANTA FE** — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) released the fourth-quarter update of its fiscal year 2022 (FY22) performance assessment report that offers the public, stakeholders, and legislators the opportunity to track the Department's progress in protecting public health and the environment.

The fourth quarter report, developed by NMED's Office of Strategic Initiatives, covers the period from April 1, 2022 through June 30, 2022. The fourth quarter report is the final installment in reporting on 47 performance measures over five broad categories as follows:

- 7 public health measures,
- 9 environmental protection measures,
- 24 compliance measures,
- 4 economic investment measures, and
- 3 operational measures.

The fourth quarter report also includes a broader look at FY22 as whole and provides retrospective insights from across the fiscal year (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022).

"The Environment Department touches so many aspects of daily life for most New Mexicans, including growing our economy while protecting our food, water, air and workplaces," said **NMED Cabinet Secretary James Kenney**. "This performance assessment report provides a great snapshot on the important work we perform every day across New Mexico. And while we had many successes last fiscal year, our primary impediment to doing more to protect public health and the environment is budget. I am extremely proud of our employees who continue to make a difference in the lives New Mexicans on a daily basis."

While the 47 performance measures largely stem from agreements between NMED and the Legislative Finance Committee for state fiscal year 2022, the NMED uses these reports to provide other information to the legislature, the public and stakeholders.

Highlights from the report include:

- 98% of New Mexicans breathed clean air across all four quarters of FY22.
- 89% of New Mexicans drank safe drinking water across all four quarters of FY22.
- NMED invested over \$31.6M in communities for water and solid waste management projects. In addition, NMED was critical to negotiating a \$32M Gold King Mine settlement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency which will fund restoration and outdoor recreation projects across impacted communities.
- 114 new water infrastructure projects were initiated through NMED across the state in FY22, exceeding our goal by 34%.
- NMED conducted 8,916 compliance inspections across the entire fiscal year which fell short of our target of 10,370 compliance inspections due to refocusing staff on wildfire and flooding response, focusing on the resolution of numerous enforcement actions, and lack staff and travel budget.
- NMED anticipated industry compliance rates of at least 85% across eight separate regulatory programs. Four regulatory program areas exceeded this benchmark while four regulatory program areas fell below this benchmark:
  - Liquid waste program (i.e., septic systems): 99.7% in compliance
  - Radiation licensing program (i.e., medical equipment): 96% in compliance
  - Solid and infectious waste management facilities: 95.5% in compliance
  - Groundwater discharge permittees: 94.4% in compliance
  - Air emitting sources: 70% in compliance
  - Restaurants and food manufacturers: 59.3% in compliance
  - Hazardous waste management facilities: 58.1% in compliance
  - Surface water discharge permittees: 41.8% in compliance
- NMED collected \$2.4M in civil penalties that was reverted to the general fund.
- NMED Drinking Water Bureau staff provided direct technical assistance to 144 community water systems to help them move from a status of non-compliance to compliance.
- NMED's Surface Water Bureau reduced runoff into rivers and streams by over 800,000 pounds which more than doubles our target of 400,000 pounds.
- NMED's vacancy rate ended FY22 at 25%, a slight increase from the start of the year, as the department worked to retain staff who report they are leaving for higher-paying jobs with more manageable workloads. In the fourth quarter, we instituted a variety of retention incentives to retain employees and saw promising early results from a newly implemented hiring pilot program.
- NMED's modernization efforts allowed for 17.7% of all financial transactions in FY22 to occur through an online payment platform from our website.

View the FY22 Q4 Performance Report [here](#).

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N4050 | P.O. Box 5469 | Santa Fe, NM 87502 or (505) 827-2855 or [nd.coordinator@state.nm.us](mailto:nd.coordinator@state.nm.us). If you believe that you have been discriminated against with respect to a NMED program or activity, you may contact the Non-Discrimination Coordinator.

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