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Fix a Leak Week is Celebrated throughout New Mexico

March 2011 launched the first and fabulous Fix a Leak Week in our Land of Enchantment. [Read more....](#)



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Hard hats, safety vests, and 11 miles of dirt road lead NMWCA members to a new water treatment plant. [Check it out....](#)

NMOSE Interactive Plant List



Save Time, Money and Water with the New NMOSE Interactive Plant List

Select plants most appropriate to specific microclimates in New Mexico with a new interactive plant list. [Click here for more information....](#)



Students Learn About Drinking Water

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Eighth grade students receive a first-hand lesson about their drinking water. [Read more....](#)

RiverXchange Rio Rancho



RiverXchange Reaches 13 Rio Rancho Classrooms This School Year

A trip to the bosque teaches 5th graders about a tree's lifecycle and the Rio Grande River. [Read more....](#)



Puppets Teach Water Conservation

ABCWUA Staff Use Puppets to Teach Children about Water Conservation

Did you know NMWCA meetings can be entertaining? When participants include puppets, you bet they can. [Check it out....](#)

Poster Contest

Santa Fe announces winners of Childrens' Poster Contest

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Ask a Pro

NMOSE teams with Ask a Pro plumbers to provide helpful information for public water suppliers and residential homeowners. Check it out! <http://www.krqe.com/subindex/connections/>



Fix a Leak Week is Celebrated Throughout New Mexico

Several cities in New Mexico participated in this year's Fix a Leak Week (FAL) Campaign held March 14-20. The New Mexico Office of the State Engineer (NMOSE) organized the statewide event that included multiple partnerships, a traveling show, and a media day.

The traveling show, which stopped at six promotional events, consisted of a booth and two hands-on displays featuring a running water meter and a leaky toilet flapper. The booth had running videos about leak detection and water repairs as well as posters and educational materials about the EPA's WaterSense program. Event goers could also pick up a new flyer on finding residential leaks using their home's meter. The flyer was developed by the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA), in cooperation with NMOSE.



At the last minute, we were surprised to find out that “Flo,” the EPA WaterSense spokes-gallon, would be able to join the traveling show. Flo was a great attraction for kids and provided photo opportunities for the media, which helped raise awareness of water conservation and the Fix a Leak Week events. We were very pleased she could join in the festivities.

Many organizations, cities, and local businesses participated in the Fix a Leak Week events and joined forces with NMOSE and others to promote water conservation. The traveling show was seen at the New Mexico Xeriscape Expo, which attracted about 7,500 people this year. The New Mexico Roundhouse (state capital) event was part of the legislative Earth Science Day. Each city organized its own event. Two were held at hardware stores (Home Depot in Albuquerque and True Value in Rio Rancho), and two were set up at community spaces (Santa Fe and Gallup). Other local businesses, such as independent hardware stores, irrigation suppliers, solar power and green building companies, and recycling groups participated as well. The Cities of Santa Fe, Gallup and Rio Rancho also gave away WaterSense showerheads from Niagara to event goers.



The Fix a Leak Week launched in Albuquerque with a media kick off day. Channel 7 (KOAT) and Channel 4 (KOB) ran stories on the evening news shows, and Channel 4 ran stories the following morning. The NMOSE and each participating city distributed press releases prior to the events, and several newspapers, weeklies and trade magazines covered the events. Gallup and Rio Rancho advertised by putting inserts in their bills to residents, and Rio Rancho placed ads in their local newspaper.

The NMOSE also sent letters about the event to all 635 public water suppliers in the state with an invitation to participate in the festivities. Suppliers were invited to become WaterSense partners and were offered access to the FAL bill stuffers. As a result of the outreach, Las Vegas, Truth or Consequences, and Los Lunas took advantage of promotional materials, and several small Mutual Domestic water systems indicated that they would participate on their own.

The NMOSE and all of our partners are planning to participate again next year. We look forward to improving upon this year's event.

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NMWCA Members Tour the Buckman Direct Diversion

New Mexico Water Conservation Alliance (NMWCA) members met bright and early on a crisp March morning to tour the City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County's newly constructed water diversion and Buckman Regional Water Treatment Plant (BRWTP). Project Manager Rick Carpenter, who has managed the construction of the diversion and the treatment plant for the past 10 years, met with the members. Alliance members received a quick safety talk, were asked to don hard hats and safety vests, and then carpooled the 11 miles of dirt road to the Rio Grande.

Carpenter explained that the diversion was situated in that specific location as part of agreements made with San Ildefonso Pueblo, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Alternative locations would have been more difficult or impossible. Raw water is diverted and pumped up-hill 1100 vertical feet to the BRWTP. The Buckman Direct Diversion (BDD) includes the diversion structure, two treated water pump stations, 12 million gallon water storage capacity, 31 miles of raw and finished water pipelines, and a one-megawatt solar generator with 8 acres of solar panels.



What makes this water project unique is a series of conventional and advanced water treatment processes beyond those commonly used across the nation. The conventional processes remove the vast majority of contaminants. The advanced processes provide additional treatment and polishing of the finished drinking water. Conventional treatment processes include coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation and disinfection. Raw water ozonation improves the effectiveness of conventional treatment. Advanced treatment is provided by membrane filters, ozone and granular activated carbon contactors. Disinfection is accomplished with lower amounts of chlorine because the high-quality water does not need as much chlorine.

Alliance members were impressed by the magnitude of the project. NMWCA President Marian Wrage asked why there is a need to have a new source of water supply while current water supplies can be managed by efficient conservation programs. Carpenter explained that although Santa Fe has successful conservation programs, they are over pumping the groundwater wells, resulting in damage to the regional aquifer. Even in the best of years, the Santa Fe River reservoirs can only supply about half of the water the region needs. In very dry years, they cannot supply much water at all, and emergency water restrictions have to be put in place. In addition, their water supply could be dramatically reduced by circumstances beyond their control, such as a prolonged drought or a fire in the watershed. By diverting and treating San Juan Chama water, the Santa Fe community has a new reliable and sustainable water supply source.

The City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County have been improving water conservation programs over the years, and the water from the BDD will be managed and conserved in the same efficient way. Successful water conservation programs in Santa Fe have achieved low per capita water demand levels through the implementation of a comprehensive set of ordinances that require Santa Fe citizens and businesses to comply with water conservation requirements designed to provide incentives to conserve water. These low per capita per day (gpcd) water production statistics are among the lowest in New Mexico: 98 gpcd in 2009 for the city and 86 gpcd for the county.

To learn more about the BRWTP and the City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County water conservation programs, go to: www.bddproject.org, www.water2conserve.com, and www.santafecounty.org/waterconservation.

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Save Time, Money and Water with the New NMOSE Interactive Plant List

A searchable plant list to encourage water conservation in landscapes is now available on the New Mexico State Engineer's (NMOSE) Web site. The list has expert-recommended suggestions of low-water use, native, or adaptive plants that thrive in New Mexico's climate and save water.

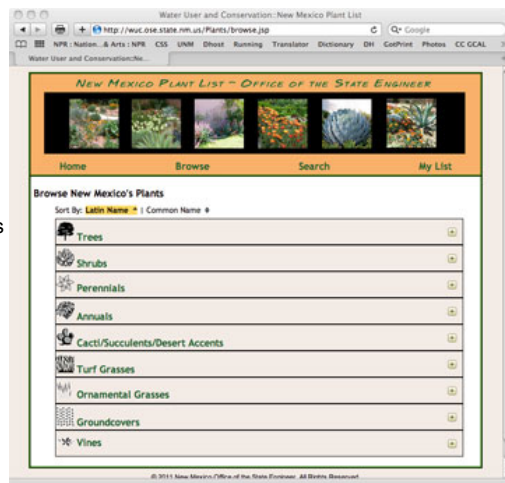
In an effort to instruct New Mexicans in the art of using outdoor water more efficiently, NMOSE in collaboration with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, is offering this plant information to the public. Several search criteria can be selected including region, plant category, flower color, bloom season, sun exposure, plant size, deciduous/evergreen, water requirement, wildlife attraction, and soil type.

"The Interactive Plant List will help people select a plant that is appropriate to specific microclimates. This useful tool prevents costly experiments for home and business owners," said Water Use and Conservation Bureau Chief John Longworth.

A plant list advisory team of volunteers and experts from NMOSE, San Juan College, Green Forward Landscape Design, Agua Fria Nursery, Judith Phillips Design Oasis, New Mexico State University, Schultz Communications, University of Texas at El Paso, and a plant expert from Carlsbad Caverns, worked together to compile the information. Plant photographs on the Web site were provided by High Country Gardens and the Quercus Group. The project was jointly funded by NMOSE and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

To access the plant list, go to <http://wuc.ose.state.nm.us/Plants/>.

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Rio Rancho Middle School Students Tour Large Arsenic Removal Facility

The City of Rio Rancho recently hosted 140 8th grade physical science students and their teachers from Rio Rancho Middle School with a tour of Well 10 Water Complex, which is one of the largest arsenic removal facilities in the southwest. During the tour, CH2M Hill OMI guides described the coagulation-adsorption filtration process used to remove arsenic from the groundwater. Arsenic is a naturally occurring element found in the volcanic rock deposits on the west side of the Rio Grande in the greater Albuquerque metropolitan area. It dissolves in the aquifer. The students also experienced a classroom-type setting to learn about where Rio



Rio Rancho Middle School students learn about their area's water source.

experiences a classroom type setting to learn about where Rio Rancho obtains its drinking water, water conservation, valance states of the arsenic during treatment and removal, watersheds, and the water cycle.



Rio Rancho Middle School science students during the tour of Well 10 Water Complex



Rio Rancho Middle School science students during the tour of Well 10 Water Complex. Corey Terrell of CH2M Hill OMI (center in blue) conducted the tour.

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RiverXchange Reaches 13 Rio Rancho Classrooms This School Year



Thirteen classrooms from Rio Rancho Elementary Schools participated in the RiverXchange this school year.

The RiverXchange project is the brainchild of Katie Babuska of Experiential EE, LLC, who designed the project to be a deep-water education curriculum. During the school year, one local classroom partners with a similar classroom from another location in the United States or overseas. Students interact through a Web site to share what they learn about their respective rivers. The project for the Rio Rancho classes is funded by grants from U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Southern Sandoval County Arroyo Flood Control Authority.

In April 2011, 150 5th grade students from Puesta del Sol and Sandia Vista Elementary Schools went on a field trip to the bosque (cottonwood riparian forest) of Rio Rancho at the Willow Creek Open Space area. The students took a bosque discovery walk to learn about the flora and fauna in the area. They monitored the groundwater level and the pH and conductivity of the groundwater compared to the Rio Grande river water. The students also adopted a cottonwood tree to learn about the tree's lifecycle and importance to the bosque's health.



Students on the Bosque Discovery Walk.

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Students with Marchell Schuman (center) reading the groundwater level chart.

ABCWUA Staff Use Puppets to Teach Children about Water Conservation

At the January 2011 meeting of the New Mexico Water Conservation Alliance, Sharon Svinski, Katherine Yuhas, and Miriam Montoya put on a puppet show! All three puppeteers are from the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA), and they presented a hilarious show that they perform for elementary school children within their jurisdiction. The puppets teach the children about water conservation and where their drinking water comes from, and they sing a rousing song about the water cycle with audience participation, of course. You too can sing along! Click here: http://www.abcwua.org/education/educators_puppet.html



Puppeteers Sharon Svinski (left), Katherine Yuhas (center) and Miriam Montoya (right).

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City of Santa Fe Names Winners of Kids' Poster Contest

Youngsters of Santa Fe who took honors in the city's annual Children's Water Conservation Poster Contest were recognized at Wednesday's City Council meeting. Alicia Stewart, a sixth-grade student from Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences, won the top prize with her poster message "Save the Drop, Save the World" using this year's theme "Fix a Leak."

Winning posters from 18 children will be on display at City Hall through May 31, with first- and second-place winners to be featured in a calendar for 2012. Alicia's grand prize winning poster will be displayed on a city bus for a year.

More than 450 students in 1st through 6th grades submitted art for consideration. All winners will receive a trophy, a prize package, and a U.S. Savings Bond.



Sixth-grade— Grand prize: Alicia Stewart, Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences

First-grade winners

First place: Aaron Nevarez,
Aspen Community Magnet School

Second place: Skyler Hraber,
Aspen Community Magnet School

Third place: Kiana J. Dixon,
Aspen Community Magnet School

Second-grade winners

First place: Sage Merriam,
Wood Gormley Elementary School

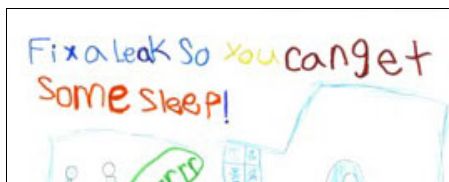
Second place: Sherab Namchak,
Wood Gormley Elementary School

Third place: Nive Bala,
Wood Gormley Elementary School

Third-grade winners

First place: William Thornburg,
Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences

Second place: Jonah Zisman,
Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences





First-grade— First place: Aaron Nevarez,
Aspen Community Magnet School

Third place: Simone Edwards,
Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences

Fourth-grade winners

First place: Bianca Almeida,
Agua Fría Elementary

Second place: Adan Benavidez,
Agua Fría Elementary

Third place: Makai Weber Colvin,
Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences

Fifth-grade winners

First place: Lisel Faust, Fayette Street Academy

Second place: Indira Holdsworth,
Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences

Third place: Sabrina DeDomenico,
Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences

Sixth-grade winners

Grand prize: Alicia Stewart,
Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences

Second place: Isabel Rodriguez,
Nava Elementary School

Third place: Merit Willey,
Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences



Fifth-grade—Second place:
Indira Holdsworth,
Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences



Fifth-grade—Third place:
Sabrina DeDomenico,
Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences

(Article published courtesy of the *Santa Fe New Mexican*)

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A Newsletter Published by the New Mexico Water Conservation Alliance

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