

Albuquerque - Official City Website

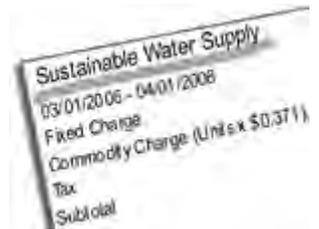
The Drinking Water Project



Since 1963, water customers have invested more than \$50 million in the San Juan-Chama project. The project consists of diversion structures in the Colorado River Basin in southern Colorado that capture part of New Mexico's share of the Colorado River. The water is channeled through 26 miles of tunnels under the Continental Divide into the Rio Grande Basin to be stored at Heron Reservoir. Stored water from the reservoir makes its way into the Rio Chama and, then, to the Rio Grande.

Background

In 1997, the City Council adopted the [Water Resources Management Strategy](#) to transition from sole reliance on the aquifer to renewable supplies, primarily our San Juan-Chama water. As a part of the strategy, the Drinking Water project will use our surface water from the San Juan-Chama project as a drinking water supply. Seven dedicated water rate increases have been approved by the City Council for design and construction of the new facilities. The fund is entitled "Sustainable Water Fund" on your water bill. Visit [Water Customer Services](#) for more information about water rates and how to read your water bill.



The Drinking Water Project includes:

- » A Diversion Dam on the Rio Grande just south of the Alameda Bridge.
- » A Pump Station to move the diverted water from the river to the water treatment plant.
- » A large diameter Pipeline to carry the water from the pump station to the water treatment plant.
- » A state-of-the-art Water Treatment Plant now under construction near Montano and Chappell Roads.
- » A Pump Station to move the treated drinking water from the treatment plant to the distribution system.
- » 56 miles of Pipeline to carry the treated water from the pump station through the existing distribution system.

If you would like more information about the [San Juan-Chama Drinking Water Project](#), please call 768-2562 or the construction hotline at 242-ROAD.

Just How Safe Is It?

For many years, the Utility has monitored the Rio Grande to establish a water quality baseline. Samples are collected at various sites along the river from the Heron Lake outlet to Albuquerque's diversion dam site. (Heron Lake stores San Juan-Chama water.)

The monitoring results compare favorably to USEPA drinking water quality standards. Because no metals, minerals, or nutrients nor organic substances have been detected in excess of USEPA standards, river water will meet requirements for those substances. Likewise, levels of radionuclides detected in the river water are far below USEPA standards and the risk of radioactivity potentially flowing from Los Alamos is extremely low.

Water treatment will remove particulate matter from the water including turbidity, sediment and microbial contaminants such as bacteria, Giardia and Cryptosporidium. Although no Giardia or

Cryptosporidium has been detected in any sample to date, these contaminants would be removed should they ever appear.

Ozone and granular activated carbon filtration are effective in removing organics, including pharmaceutically active compounds that may have found their way into the river. If such compounds show up, they will be oxidized, then absorbed onto the filters.

Additional samples will be collected every year to determine water quality changes over time. This information will assist the Utility in modifying or refining treatment or identifying the need for additional treatment to ensure the high quality of our drinking water. The water quality monitoring program will continue indefinitely.

How Will It Taste?

Today, some 90 wells pump water to supply the Utility. The water from each well has a slightly different taste from the others. When the Drinking Water Project is fully operational, a uniform quality water will be produced to match the average water quality of the existing groundwater system. This may produce a slight change in the taste of the water.

Public Meetings & Information

As the Drinking Water Project progresses, the City may host public meetings to provide additional opportunities and discussion.

Usted puede encontrar esta información en el [Informe de Calidad de Agua en Español](#).

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