



State of New Mexico

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2025-373

DECLARING AN EMERGENCY IN TORRANCE COUNTY DUE TO MULTIPLE WELL OUTAGES AND AUTHORIZING EMERGENCY FUNDS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS, Torrance County overlies the Estancia Basin, a closed groundwater basin that supplies most domestic and agricultural use in the area;

WHEREAS, long-term studies have documented substantial declines in groundwater levels due to pumping in excess of natural recharge;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Geological Survey reported that between about 1950 and 1985 groundwater levels in parts of the Estancia Basin declined approximately 50 to 60 feet, reflecting sustained drawdown from large-scale withdrawals;

WHEREAS, current hydrologic assessments for the Estancia Basin note that groundwater levels continue to be vulnerable because extraction and evapotranspiration have historically exceeded recharge, creating water-supply risks for rural communities;

WHEREAS, periodic drought conditions in Torrance County further reduce recharge and increase pressure on groundwater supplies, heightening the risk of well failures and water shortages across the county;

WHEREAS, multiple communities in northern Torrance County have experienced loss of service and well production problems;

WHEREAS, reported well failures and low-yield conditions across the County have required emergency water deliveries and conservation measures to protect public health and safety;

WHEREAS, these well failures prompted the Torrance Board of County Commissioners to issue an emergency resolution declaring a disaster on October 27, 2025;

WHEREAS, the local disaster declaration issued by Torrance County states that all available local resources are insufficient to address this emergency and requests financial aid and material assistance from the State of New Mexico;

WHEREAS, this disaster requires immediate actions to protect public peace, health, and safety; and

WHEREAS, this disaster is of such magnitude as to be beyond local control and requires the resources of the State of New Mexico to minimize economic and physical harm and to take actions necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Howie Morales, Lieutenant Governor of the State of New Mexico and acting Governor pursuant to Article V, Section 7 of the New Mexico Constitution, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the State of New Mexico do hereby **DECLARE** a state of emergency to exist in Torrance County due to multiple well outages, and **ORDER** and **DIRECT** as follows:

1. The Department of Finance and Administration shall make available emergency financial resources in an amount not to exceed two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00) to the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in accordance with NMSA 1978, Sections 12-11-23 to -25, and NMSA 1978, Sections 12-10-14 to -15. The funds shall be expended for the resources and services necessary to, on a temporary, emergency basis, provide water supply to residents, support water quality testing by the

Department of Environment on the water provided to residents, and for any other action necessary to protect the public health, safety, welfare, and property. The funds shall be expended in accordance with the policy and procedures of the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, as approved by the Governor or her Authorized Representative.

2. The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management shall coordinate all requests for assistance and responses to such requests under the authority of and as determined by the Governor or her Authorized Representative. In addition to such other eligibility criteria as may be established by the Governor or her Authorized Representative, applicants requesting financial assistance from the State for necessary action taken in response to the emergency shall be required to demonstrate that the cost of the necessary action exceeds their available resources, as determined based upon criteria developed in conjunction with the State agencies, if any, with financial and budgetary oversight responsibilities for the applicant.

3. Water provided in response to the emergency shall meet standards appropriate for residential use. The Department of Environment shall perform water quality testing as necessary to ensure residents have water that meets safe drinking water standards.

4. The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management shall coordinate with the Public Regulation Commission on assistance provided in response to the emergency. The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management shall, upon delivering any water to residents, provide detailed information as to its quantity and cost to the Public Regulation Commission as needed and in a manner which facilitates appropriate regulatory action. This information shall be provided to the staff of the Public Regulation Commission as expeditiously as possible.

5. All Cabinet Departments and agencies under gubernatorial control shall provide any assistance that may be required by the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management or by the State Emergency Operations Center under the authority of the Governor's Authorized Representative, including, as consistent with applicable law, expediting all regulatory approval processes necessary to secure a long-term resolution to the emergency.

I FURTHER ORDER and DIRECT as follows:

1. This Order supersedes any previous orders, proclamations, or directives to the extent they are in conflict.
2. This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until all authorized funds are expended or no longer necessary to provide emergency assistance.

ATTEST:



MAGGIE TOULOUSE OLIVER
SECRETARY OF STATE

DONE AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE
THIS 28TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2025

WITNESS MY HAND AND THE GREAT
SEAL OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO



HOWIE MORALES
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

