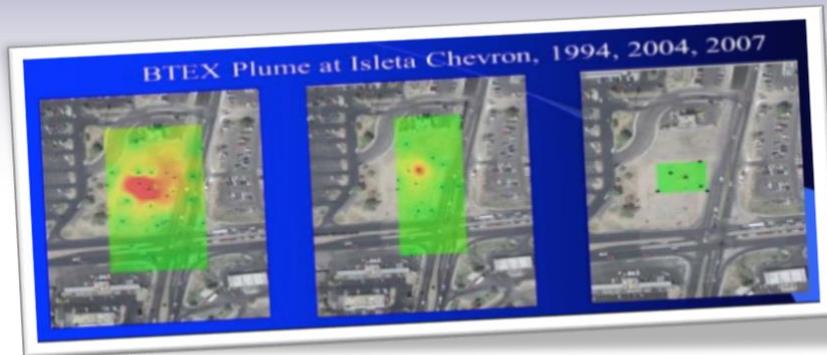


Underground Storage Tanks

2,278 petroleum product leaks into ground and water



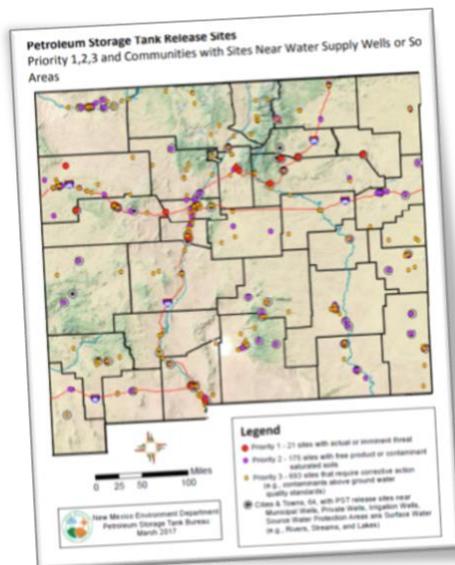
In March 2017, NMED reported that 2,787 “releases” from underground gasoline storage tanks had been reported to the department statewide. Of more than 19,000 underground tanks believed to be in New Mexico (many are unregistered, according to NMED).

Of the 2,787 known leaks, 21 are considered “priority” where “actual or imminent threat to human health” is a concern. 64 communities of all sizes have contamination already impacting or threatening drinking water supplies.¹

Among the most notable examples are approximately 25 gas stations with leaks lining Isleta Boulevard from Albuquerque through the South Valley to Isleta Pueblo in Bernalillo County. As of 2017, 5 sites had been remediated at a cost to state taxpayers of \$8.4 million. 20 sites remain in monitor status with no remediation plan.

Petroleum storage tank permit applications do not require environmental assessments prior to issue. As is well-documented, tanks were previously permitted without

regard for their proximity to groundwater sources or notice to nearby residents. While today’s tanks are designed to last much longer and to be more secure against rupture, additional releases do



occur during truck-tank deliveries, within individual gas pump machinery and with customer misuse. Strict

environmental review may be necessary for sites near sensitive water sources.

LEAKS NEAR CRITICAL WATER SOURCES



Ramah (McKinley County): The village’s primary water source is located downgrade from a leaking underground gas tank. The responsible party is deceased, leaving taxpayers to foot the bill to save the village’s sole water source.

Canoncito (San Miguel County): The water supply for the city’s sole grocery store has been contaminated by underground tank leaks.

Watrous (Mora County): The village’s community water association has been contaminated, believed to come from a leaking tank. Taxpayers have spent \$1.6 million to protect the village water system and find alternative water for nearby private wells.

Pueblo of Laguna/Grants Cibola County Schools (Cibola County): The school board’s bus facility on the Laguna Pueblo contaminated the site. NMED and the EPA worked to make the state’s Corrective Action Fund available to help fund the cleanup which was too large for the local schools to fund.

Grants, Milan, San Rafael (Cibola County): NMED identified contamination in ground near a former underground storage tank. Five wells located within a four-mile radius of the known spill are the sole or major drinking water supplies for three nearby communities.

NMED presentation to NMLEG, March 2017, <https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/RHMC%20062617%20Item%201%20Corrective%20Action%20Fund%20FAQs.pdf>