



## **MEDIA RELEASE – For Immediate Release**

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### **ALAMOSA WATER SYSTEM PROGRESS**

**Alamosa, CO** – Mayor Farris Bervig reported that the community continues to function under a Stage 2 (yellow) water alert. As a reminder, residents can take brief showers in lukewarm water and also wash clothes. Citizens on city water should continue using bottled water for drinking and cooking.

The Mayor also noted the commitment from the community. Local businesses have donated called for items. City Market has donated and distributed 22,000 Clorox wipes and yesterday donated 5,000 bottles of hand sanitizer for distribution.

Many local businesses have also permitted employees to take time off work to donate their time and energy to assist. Chili's, although remaining closed to date, has continued to pay employees' wages and is encouraging staff to volunteer their time to distribute water. Matt Whipple, Chili's employee and distribution volunteer reflected, "You don't know how often you use water until you don't have it."

The Mayor applauds these businesses and volunteers for their dedication to the community. At this time 812 volunteers have given 3,447 over hours of assistance.

School Superintendent Henry Herrera announced that schools are in need of sanitizing wipes. Anyone wishing to donate to the school district can contact Charlie Jackson, Director of Maintenance, at 719-588-2093.

Health officials are asking that anyone with symptoms, like diarrhea, stay home until they have been free of those symptoms for at least 24 hours. The advice applies to children and adults alike, and is especially important for healthcare, childcare and food service workers. Hand washing remains a priority now, but should be a part of daily life at all times.

Flushing and testing of the water distribution system is continuing and residents will be notified when the system moves to Stage 3 (green), but an estimated date has not been announced. The "all clear" determination will be made by state officials.

The new water treatment facility is expected to become operational in June, with testing expected to begin in May. The new plant will include a chlorination process. Chlorination levels are currently below 4 parts per million and will continue at a level of 1 to 2 parts per million until the switchover to the new system is made.

Currently two distribution centers will be in operation from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. to provide safe drinking water for

those who needed. The centers are located at the old Kmart building and Boyd Park. The water distribution site at the Regional Medical Center completed operation yesterday; however, recycling facilities will remain available at the hospital. Recycling bins are also available at both the distribution centers that are continuing service.

As of Tuesday at 3:30 p.m., there have been 343 total cases of salmonella reported, 91 confirmed cases and 13 hospitalized.

The vouchers distributed at the La Gente Center from the Denver Salvation Army are no longer available for Alamosa residents to receive paper products.

Numerous local, state and federal agencies have responded to the incident, including: Alamosa Fire Department, Alamosa County Nursing, Alamosa County Sheriff's Office, Alamosa County Management, Alamosa County Road and Bridge, Alamosa County Emergency Management, Alamosa Water Department, Alamosa Police Department, City of Alamosa Management, City of Durango, City of Ft. Collins, Costilla County, Homeland Security, Rio Grande County, Saquache County, Jefferson County Incident Management Team, Northwest Colorado Incident Management Team, San Luis Valley Regional EMS/Trauma Advisory Council, San Luis Valley Mental Health, U.S. Forest Service, Colorado National Guard, Colorado Department of Health and Environment, Denver Environmental Health, Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado Division of Emergency Management, Denver Water, Aurora Water, Boulder Water, Pueblo Water, Colorado Rural Water Association, East Cherry Creek Village, Red Cross, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services operating divisions to include the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Food and Drug Administration, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For more information, please call the CO-Help line at 1-877-462-2911, which is staffed from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. seven days a week, or visit [www.CityofAlamosa.org](http://www.CityofAlamosa.org) or watch Cable Channel 10. Information is also available in Spanish at [www.cdph.state.co.us/epr/AlamosaEspanol.html](http://www.cdph.state.co.us/epr/AlamosaEspanol.html).

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