

## **Data Notes**

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) is currently monitoring for SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) in wastewater collected at ten wastewater treatment plants across the state, representing approximately two-thirds of New Mexico's sewer population. At each utility, 24-hour composite samples are collected twice weekly and shipped to the agency's Scientific Laboratories Division (SLD) to analyze gene markers unique to the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Specifically, SLD uses a nucleic acid-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assay to identify N1 and N2 genes, which the CDC has recommended as targets for identifying SARS-CoV-2. The graph summarizes wastewater monitoring results reported to NMDOH in units of viral copies per liter. Data is displayed in weekly averages of 'normalized' viral levels, adjusted by number of people served by the sewer system and daily wastewater flow, to roughly compare viral concentrations across sites with different population and flow levels.

Note: Graph shows the past 6 months of data. Change in testing method was implemented in March of 2024 and may affect ability to compare results with those previous to method change.

## **Data Sources**

**Centers for Disease Control National Wastewater Surveillance System (CDC NWSS)** is a national public health surveillance network organized by CDC for tracking laboratory-confirmed SARS-CoV-2, Mpox, and other pathogens. This network is made up of over 1200 wastewater facilities from all 50 states, 3 territories, and 5 tribal organizations who collect samples of untreated wastewater or primary sludge. These samples are sent to environmental laboratories for SARS-CoV-2 testing. The testing data, along with the associated utility metadata, are submitted to participating state and local health departments. Health departments submit these data to CDC who analyze the data and report it through the COVID Data Tracker site.

**New Mexico Wastewater Surveillance (NM WWS), *Environmental Health Epidemiology Bureau, Center for Health Protection, Public Health Division, New Mexico Department of Health.*** At each wastewater facility, 24-hour composite samples are collected twice weekly and shipped to the NMDOH Scientific Laboratories Division (SLD) to analyze gene markers unique to the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Specifically, SLD uses a nucleic acid-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assay to identify N1 and N2 genes, which the CDC has recommended as targets for identifying SARS-CoV-2. These targets are reported to NM WWS in viral genome copies/liter. NM WWS reports these results to the CDC National Wastewater Surveillance System weekly.

**New Mexico Sewershed Population Estimates** are determined and reported by wastewater treatment facility partners to the NM WWS.