

# SAN LUIS VALLEY

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Response to Water Incidents

# Introductions

## ***Della Vieira***

Current Director, Alamosa County Public Health

## ***Julie Geiser (Retired)***

Former Director, Alamosa County Public Health

## ***Jon Montano***

SLV RETAC Coordinator

## ***David Osborn***

SLV Field Manager

# What we will cover today

- Salmonella 2008 incident
- San Luis Water incident
- Limited budgets = Regional Collaboration
- What works in our rural area
- Aging Water Infrastructure Across the U.S.
- Tie in with Cross-Jurisdictional ESF-8 Planning



No less than ten (10) water incidents within the SLV 6 county region in the last 9 years. All counties with the exception of Mineral County have experienced water emergencies.

1. March 2008 – Alamosa Salmonella Incident
2. Feb 2012 & June 2013– San Luis, Costilla County
3. Oct 2013 – South Fork Heights, Rio Grande County
4. Nov 2013 – Del Norte, Rio Grande County
5. Nov 2013 – Garcia, Costilla County
6. Oct 2014 – KV Estates, Saguache County
7. Nov 2014 – Town of Saguache, Saguache County
8. Aug 2015 – San Acacio, Costilla County
9. Nov 2015 – San Fransisco, Costilla County
10. Nov 2015 – La Jara, Conejos County

# SALMONELLA

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Alamosa, 2008



## Economic Study Completed after the Salmonella Incident

- a. All costs calculated and documented

## National Review of aging water infrastructure across the country

- a. Some areas in the eastern part of the country have water infrastructure over 100 – 150 years old including clay piping

Intent to confront Congress with real-time data regarding the funds required to update water infrastructure across the United States.

# Salmonella: Overview

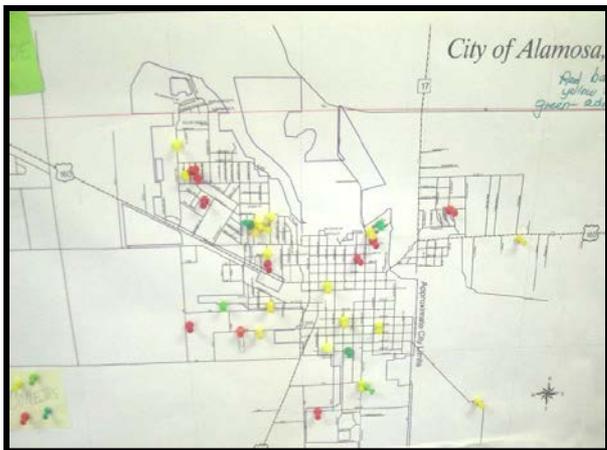
- Salmonella in the community.
- Source was not immediately obvious.
- Waiver for untreated water – monthly turbidity and coliform tests negative the week prior
- Investigation determined municipal water was contaminated.

*It can't be in the water!*



# Salmonella - 2008 Timeline

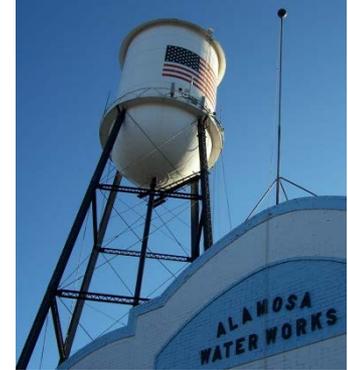
- 3/09 Sun Index case visited ED 3/9
- 3/12 Wed Hospital lab confirmed Salmonella
- 3/15 Sat Julie Geiser & Dr. Brinton activate EOC
- 3/17 Mon 25 Salmonella cases identified;  
City water common denominator  
ICS staffed by PH and EPR



# Salmonella - 2008 Timeline

3/19 Wed –

- City & County declare Disaster
- IC assumed by County EM (City absent)
- Bottled water advisory issued



3/20 Thurs – Resources arrive &  
3 PODs open



# Salmonella - 2008 Timeline

3/22 Thurs – Politicians arrive (Gov, Senators etc.)

3/23 Easter Sunday - 200 volunteers show up



# Salmonella: Numbers

- One death, 24 hospitalizations
- 435 cases over 6-7 weeks
- Over 1,032 volunteers, 4,539 volunteer hours; 200 volunteers showed up Easter morning!
- 2855 calls to COHELP
- 60,000 gallons of water
- 3 POD sites



# Salmonella: ESF8 Challenges

1. Large outbreak investigation
2. Provide potable water to city residents, including vulnerable populations
3. Inspect all food establishments and facilities
4. Prevent secondary cases
5. Keep public informed
6. County vs. Municipal
7. City/County Joint Disaster Declaration
8. Governor allocated \$300k to address disaster



# Salmonella: Local, State & Federal Support

LPHA's, Regional Partners, CDPHE, CDC, OEM, Dept. Health & Human Services, Colorado National Guard

COHELP

American Red Cross

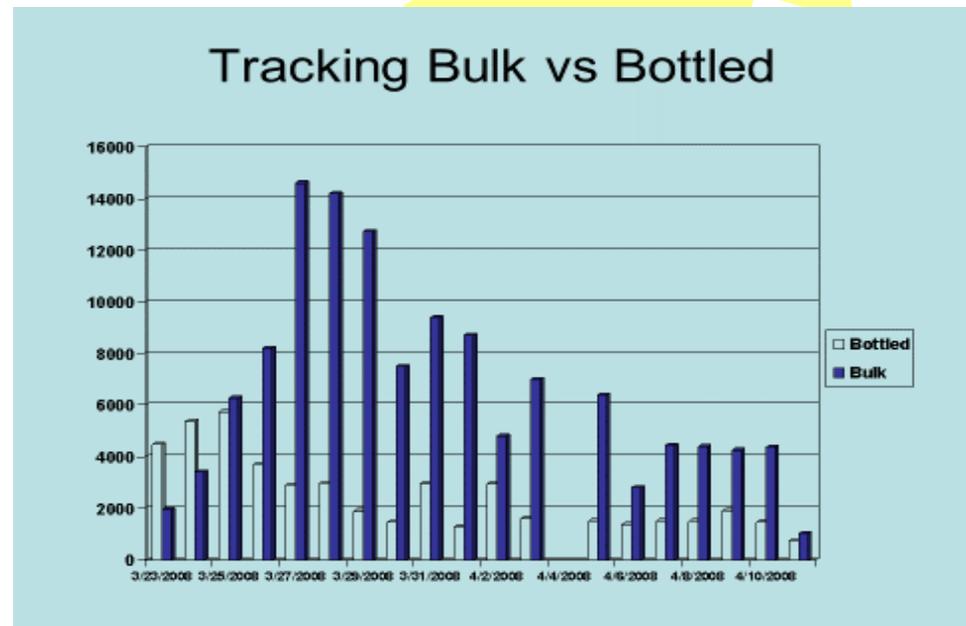
Incident Management

- Local/regional staff from 3/15-3/23
- 3 Incident Management Teams ordered including Jefferson County IMT, Northwest IMT, Eastern Colorado IMT
- City of Alamosa assumed command on April 3

# Salmonella: Resource coordination

Water, hand sanitizer, Pedialyte

How do you  
sanitize a fire  
truck?



# Salmonella: What went well



- Transitioning of Command
- Volunteers are essential & showed up
- Regional EOC as ICP
- Region well-trained in ICS
- JIC is essential
- Engaged Public Health Director, Epidemiologist & Regional OEPR staff were critical to success

# Salmonella: Lessons learned

- All resources must go through Logistics: Resource Mobilization Plan critical
- Have designated phone line for public call in
- Life goes on outside the incident
- Local media must remain a priority
- Ensure situational awareness for local partners





# SAN LUIS WATER

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Costilla County, February 2012

# San Luis Water: Overview

- Population 600-650, oldest town in the state.
- Routine monthly tests showed E.coli, and boil water advisory was issued.
- PH and EM established local ICP and requested support from regional EOC.
- POD provided water and hand sanitizer for 12 hrs/day, 6 consecutive days.
- No illnesses reported.



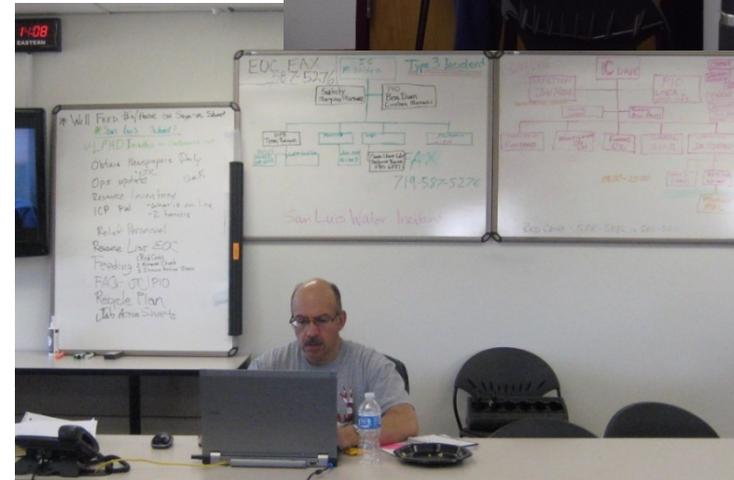
# San Luis Water – Local Response

- Water system activities (testing, flushing, etc.)
- Community notification (door-to-door, flyers, churches)
- POD operations
- Volunteer coordination
- On-site media



# San Luis Water: Regional EOC Support

- Situational awareness
- Conference calls daily
- PIO/JIS coordination
- Resource ordering
- Planning
- Record keeping
- Communication
- 30,000' view of incident



# San Luis Water: What went well

- Local response officials mobilized the community quickly and managed the incident effectively.
- PH and EM activated emergency plans and managed the incident well.
- Effective collaboration and communication between EOC and ICP.

# San Luis Water: Lessons learned

- Town and County officials needed better understanding of NIMS/ICS
- Need for improved information sharing between divisions of local city/county government
- Appropriate equipment and resources for all responding personnel and volunteers is vital
- Need for better ability to respond to needs of restaurants and other facilities (Consumer Protection).

# RURAL PLANNING

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# Regional model: What works in our region

- Staffing and resources very limited at local level
- Region can use lessons learned in one county for similar response in other counties.
- Healthcare Coalitions and Public Health Partnership have improved ability to collaborate
- Environmental Health has been added

# Tying in with Cross-Jurisdictional ESF#8 Planning Guidance

- Written plan will facilitate coordination
- Clarification of roles and responsibilities (Who owns the incident? Role of EM?)
- Improve ability to understand and access help from state
- Reduce duplication of effort
- De-conflict plans

# Q&A