



Melissa Troutman

CLIMATE & HEALTH ADVOCATE

WildEarth Guardians

A FORCE FOR NATURE

WildEarth Guardians protects and restores the wildlife, wild places, wild rivers, and health of the American West.

Eyes on Spills:

The increasing oil & gas threat to water in NM



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Oil & Gas Waste Watch Reports

Read our quarterly *Waste Watch* reports for an overview and analysis of industry pollution incidents.



Top Polluter Report:
ExxonMobil / XTO Energy



Oil & Gas Waste Watch:
Q3 (July - Sept) 2025



Oil & Gas Waste Watch:
Q2 (Apr - June) 2025



Oil & Gas Waste Watch:
Q1 (Jan - March) 2025

THE 2025 NEW MEXICO SPILL REPORT

Land,
Air, &
Water
Pollution
from Oil & Gas



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Record Volumes of Oil and Gas Spills Polluted New Mexico in 2025, New Report Finds

New Report Documents Routine, Large-Scale Pollution by Repeat Offenders

DATE

February 4, 2026

CONTACTS

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THE 2025 NEW MEXICO SPILL REPORT

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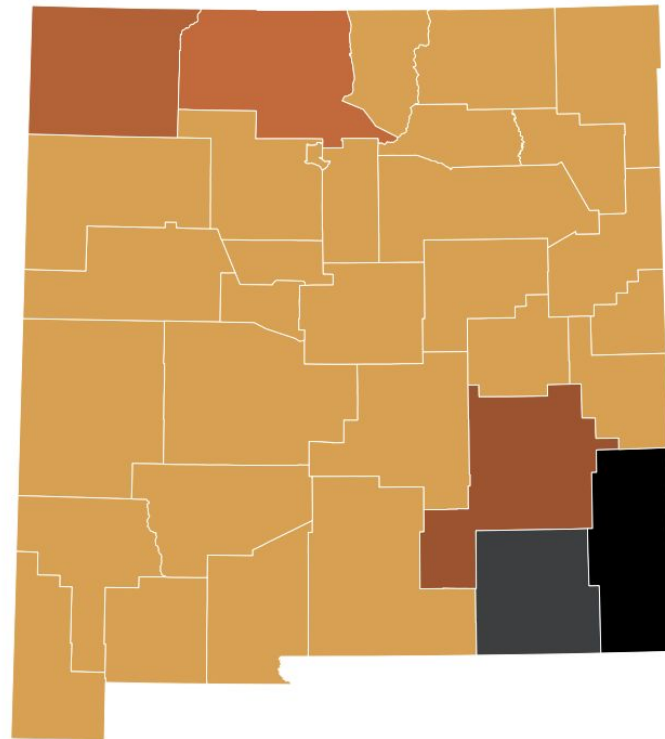
2025 TOP FINDINGS

- Toxic oil and gas waste called “produced water” is the most common liquid spilled
- Public lands are the most impacted
- “Produced water” reuse facilities are driving larger spills
- Despite chronic pollution by repeat offenders, penalties are not being issued for recurring spills by repeat offenders

MOST POLLUTED COUNTIES

COUNTY	# OF TOTAL SPILLS
• Lea	22,137
• Eddy	15,301
• Chaves	365
• San Juan	219
• Rio Arriba	110

The table above shows the number of total spills that occurred within each county.





WATER CONTAMINATION

In 2025, 15 waterways were contaminated by oil and gas spills, with 12 of these incidents occurring in San Juan County. Pipeline corrosion and equipment failure were responsible for the majority of water contamination events. A small number of operators accounted for multiple waterway impacts, with Harvest Four Corners, LLC responsible for six contaminated waterways, all in San Juan County.

Repeat offenders are responsible for spills impacting waterways, posing significant risks to water quality, mostly in the San Juan Basin.

OPERATOR	WATERWAYS AFFECTED	COUNTY
Harvest Four Corners	6	San Juan
Hilcorp Energy Company	2	San Juan
Dugan Production	2	San Juan
Enduring Resources	1	San Juan
DJR Operating	1	San Juan
Enterprise Field Services	1	San Juan
Solaris Water Midstream	1	Eddy
Targa Northern Delaware	1	Lea

The table above shows the number of spills affecting waterways per county in 2025.³⁰

**177,704 spills reported by oil and gas
companies 2022-2025 (p.11)**

	2022	2023	2024	2025
ALL SPILLS	42,725	54,618	42,208	38,153
GASEOUS SPILLS	40,945	53,025	40,815	36,683
LIQUID SPILLS	1,780	1,593	1,393	1,470
LIQUID VOLUME SPILLED	6,262,830 gal	5,120,052 gal	4,892,832 gal	9,442,230 gal
LIQUID VOLUME LOST	2,590,980 gal	1,879,374 gal	2,017,554 gal	3,515,064 gal

2025	All Spills	Gaseous Spills	Gaseous Spill Volume (MCF)	Liquid Spills	Liquid Volume Spilled (GAL)	Liquid Volume Lost (GAL)
Q1	10,578	10,237	2,752,067	341	3,294,174	490,562
Q2	10,250	9,888	2,609,056	362	1,547,028	425,922
Q3	9,515	9,094	2,089,964	421	3,188,485	2,061,047
Q4	7,810	7,464	1,768,457	346	1,416,364	538,349
TOTAL	38,153	36,683	9,219,544	1,470	9,446,051	3,515,880

2026	Q1	Q2
Liquid Spills	381	367
Volume Spilled	1,389,108 GAL	3,118,500 GAL
Volume Lost	607,404 GAL	968,520 GAL

'Our eyes were on fire': Produced water rains on home near Loving

★ Follow Nicholas Gilmore

By Nicholas Gilmore ngilmore@sfnewmexican.com Jun 13, 2026  6



“[S]pills of produced water are becoming larger and more frequent, heightening concerns among environmental advocates about the impacts to water supplies, soil and ecosystems.”

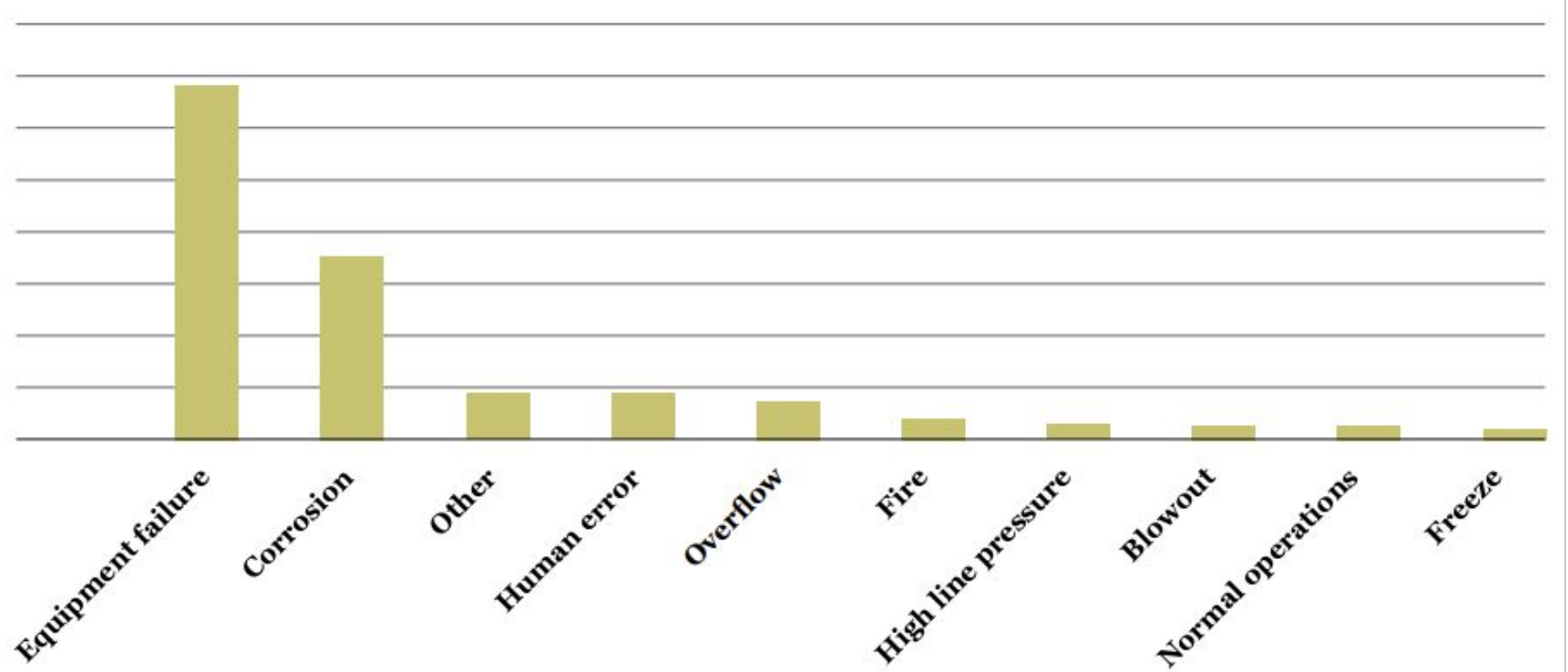
NGL PROFILE

Has reported over 40 spills to the state since spills became illegal in August 2021, including:

- 5 spills so far this year, one that contaminated a waterway
- A spill 7/6/26 at a site that has had 3 spills in the last 16 months: March 2025, May 2025, and not July 2026
- A 2023 produced water spill that contaminated groundwater contamination in Eddy Co. (private land)

Operator Name ▼	Incident Type ▼	Incident Date ▼	Final Repo ▼	Material ▼	Volume Released ▼	Volume Recovered ▼	Volume Lost ▼	Unit C ▼	Spill Cause ▼	Spill Source ▼	County ▼
NGL WATER SOLUTIONS PERMIAN, LLC	Produced Water Release	7/6/26		Produced Water	200	155	45	BBL	Equipment Failure	Coupling	Lea (25)
NGL WATER SOLUTIONS PERMIAN, LLC	Produced Water Release	6/23/26		Produced Water	500	440	60	BBL	Equipment Failure	Pipeline (Any)	Lea (25)
NGL WATER SOLUTIONS PERMIAN, LLC	Produced Water Release	5/13/26		Produced Water	40	10	30	BBL	Equipment Failure	Flow Line - Injection	Eddy (15)
NGL WATER SOLUTIONS PERMIAN, LLC	Produced Water Release	4/25/26		Produced Water	325	240	85	BBL	Equipment Failure	Flow Line - Injection	Lea (25)
NGL WATER SOLUTIONS PERMIAN, LLC	Produced Water Release	3/12/26		Produced Water	35	15	20	BBL	Equipment Failure	Flow Line - Injection	Eddy (15)

2025 TOP LIQUID SPILL CAUSES



Why the increase in produced water pollution?

Industry [blames the state](#):

“Spills happen because oilfield [waste]water management is massive, constant, and operationally complex ... That does not excuse spills, but it explains why a system built around moving very large volumes of high-salinity water will continue to experience [spills] unless the state improves infrastructure and creates better incentives for treatment, recycling, and beneficial reuse.”

– **Matthias Sayer** former [Senior Vice President of Legal – Environment, Health, Safety & Regulatory for NGL](#), now representing WATR Alliance in bid to move produced water and the potential for its spills farther afield for reuse projects.

Produced water is the most common liquid spilled – by far:

Q1 2026

85% of all liquids lost to pollution

Q2 2026

95% of all liquids lost to pollution

Reuse facilities are a leading source of major spills:

Q1 2026

3 / 10 of the largest spills caused by produced water reuse companies or infrastructure

EOG RESOURCES



Date	06/10/25
Landowner	State
County	Lea
Cause	Overflow
Material	Produced water
Volume	158,424 gal spilled / 143,094 gal lost

A June 10th spill at an EOG Resources produced water reuse pit resulted in contamination of state public lands. In the photo, sourced from state files, the path of pollution can be seen as brown stains on land and vegetation.

OXY USA

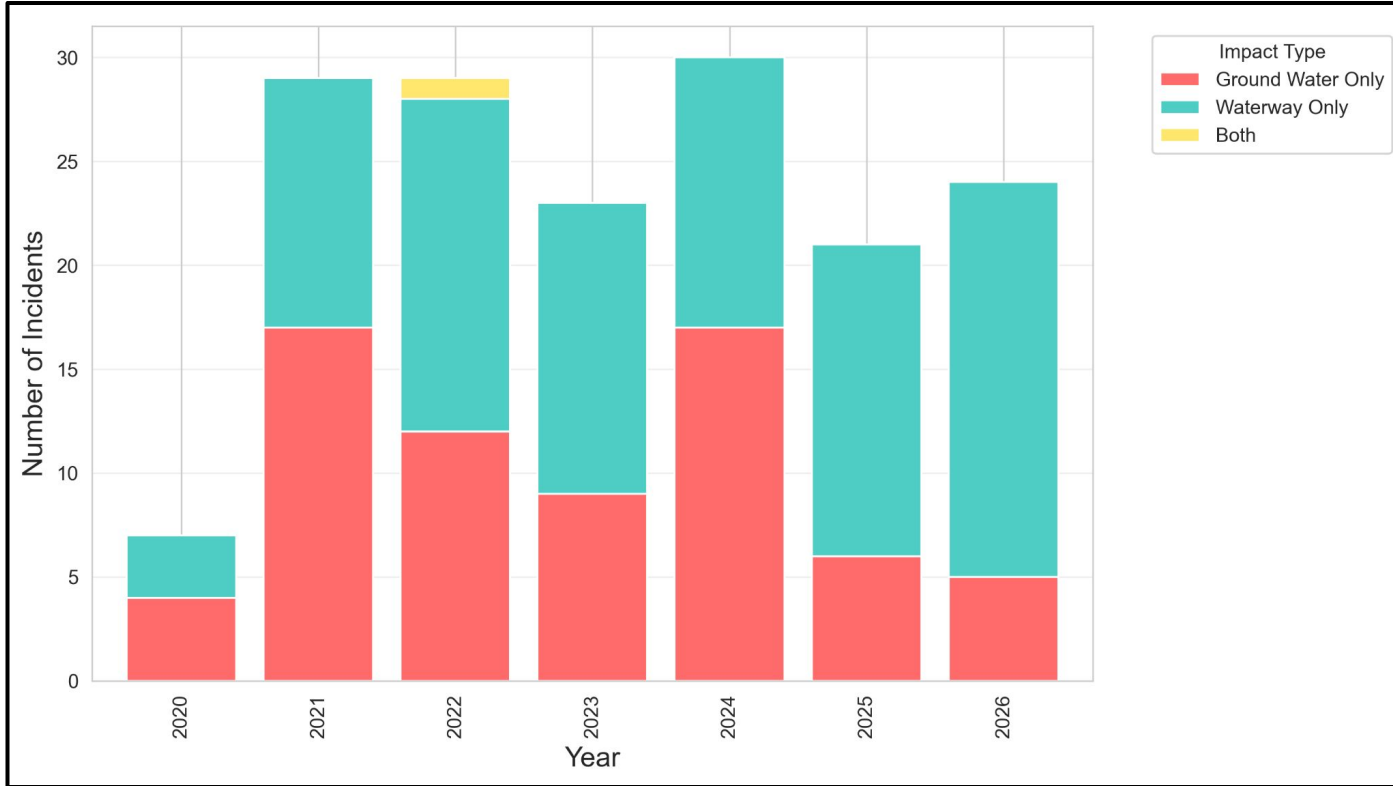


Date	07/15/25
Landowner	Federal
County	Lea
Cause	Equipment failure
Material	Produced water & crude oil

Volume

The biggest spill of 2025 occurred on federal public land in Lea County when the wall of a produced water recycling pit collapsed, polluting the surrounding landscape with 36,747 barrels (1,543,374 gallons) of toxic oil and gas waste and 2,891 barrels (121,422 gallons) of crude oil. This facility was equipped with a leak detection system and constructed to prevent “overtopping” according to a remediation plan submitted to the state.

2026 Water Pollution Outpacing 2025



Waterways:

15 (total 2025)

19 (as of 7/8/26)

Groundwater:

6 (total 2025)

5 (as of 7/8/26)

HOW TO STOP SPILL POLLUTION

1. Enforce civil penalties consistently and transparently

The Oil Conservation Division should assess civil penalties for recurring spill violations, with penalty amounts reflecting the severity, duration, and environmental harm of each incident. Enforcement outcomes should be publicly reported and linked to specific spill events, allowing the public to evaluate deterrence and compliance.

2. Require mandatory penalties for illegal liquid spills

Liquid oil and gas spills have been illegal in New Mexico since 2021. Penalties for these violations should be mandatory, not discretionary, particularly where spills involve produced water, crude oil, or chemicals that contaminate land or water.

3. Impose permit consequences for chronic polluters

Operators with repeated spill violations should face permit suspensions, denials of permit renewals, or increased bonding requirements. Allowing chronic violators to continue expanding operations without consequence undermines spill prevention and rewards noncompliance.

4. Require full chemical disclosure and end trade secret exemptions

All chemicals used or released during oil and gas operations must be fully disclosed to regulators, emergency responders, and the public to enable meaningful risk assessment and spill response. Trade secret claims should not shield hazardous substances from disclosure or accountability when public health and environmental safety are at stake.

5. Ban PFAS in all oil and gas operations to protect public health

PFAS and other “forever chemicals” used in oil and gas operations pose serious health risks, including cancer, immune system damage, and developmental harm, and persist in the environment long after release. New Mexico should prohibit the use of PFAS in oil and gas drilling, fracking, and waste handling to prevent irreversible contamination of land, water, and communities.

6. Close loopholes that inhibit full cleanup

The use of alternative abatement standards should be strictly limited. Cleanup standards must prioritize complete remediation, not long-term contamination management framed as technical infeasibility. Removing the hazardous waste exemption for oil and gas materials will increase remediation standards and clean up oversight.

7. Strengthen spill prevention and reporting rules

OCD should update rules to require greater spill prevention measures, such as improved monitoring for most common spill causes, and accessible reporting of all spill information to the public. Data gaps, including the “unknown” or “blank” categories in the spill data, make it impossible to assess risk for specific demographics.

8. Accelerate cleanup of inactive and orphaned wells

Legacy infrastructure remains a major source of spills and leaks. The state should expedite plugging and remediation of inactive and orphaned wells and update rules to require operators to post sufficient financial assurance to prevent future abandonment.

9. Prevent reuse of oil and gas waste off the oilfield

New Mexico should prohibit the reuse of treated or untreated “produced water” outside of oil and gas activities. Moving this waste off the oilfield would create additional pathways for spills, leaks, contamination, and other accidents to occur.

10. Pause new permitting until spill pollution declines

The state should pause approval of new drilling permits until spill pollution demonstrably declines and enforcement capacity matches the scale of oil and gas activity. Expansion without accountability will only compound existing harm.

THERE ARE SOLUTIONS

- Enforce the law with tangible consequences vs. sending repeated warnings
- De-privilege chronic polluters vs. granting them renewals and new approvals
- Put down the mop & turn down the tap



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