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Water-Challenged State Uses AI, Satellites to Find Leaks.

New Mexico will use artificial intelligence to monitor satellite images to identify leaks before they become major problems.

In 2022, residents in Chama, New Mexico, a Rocky Mountain village with less than 1,000 people near the Colorado border, seemingly overnight found their water taps had stopped working.

The state responded by sending in gallons of bottled water to prevent catastrophe. A subsequent investigation revealed that an unaddressed leak in the village's water system caused the disruption. New Mexico sent Chama \$800,000 in capital funds to fix it and other water infrastructure needs. But it wouldn't be the last time the village suffered a water-related incident, this summer residents had to restrict their water use after a plant shutdown.

The fragility of the water supply statewide has been on display for a while now, a dam near Albuquerque, its largest city, has been out of commission for three years. That and the other water-related incidents prompted New Mexico to unveil a 50-year action plan in January to address water scarcity.

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Route Fifty

By Chris Teale

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