



NEW MEXICO
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT



Office of the Secretary

BILL RICHARDSON
Governor
DIANE DENISH
Lieutenant Governor

Harold Runnels Building
1190 Saint Francis Drive (87505)
PO Box 5469, Santa Fe, NM 87502-5469
Phone (505) 827-2855 Fax (505) 827-2836
www.nmenv.state.nm.us

RON CURRY
Secretary
SARAH COTTRELL
Deputy Secretary

October 19, 2010
For Immediate Release

Contact: Marissa Stone Bardino, NMED Communications Director
(505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475

NMED Files Injunction Against Solid Waste Authority in Espanola to Stop Open Dumping of Trash

(Santa Fe, N.M.) The New Mexico Environment Department filed a preliminary injunction in District Court in Santa Fe this week against the Northwest New Mexico Regional Solid Waste Authority and the City of Espanola to stop the open dumping of solid waste at a transfer station in the city.

The La Loma Transfer Station is located adjacent to the Carlos Vigil Middle School in Espanola (Injunction is attached).

"The irresponsible management of the authority has created problems at a local transfer station -- causing city garbage to pile up in an unhealthy and unsightly way," said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. "We are taking these measures to ensure the closure of the local transfer station and so that members of the authority can find solutions for the safe and accountable disposal of garbage from the authority."

The authority, which is a municipal entity created among five local and tribal governments in Northern New Mexico, including the City of Espanola, manages and disposes of solid waste. The authority operates the La Loma Transfer Station.

Inspectors from department's Solid Waste Bureau traveled to the facility on Sept. 20 and 27 after being informed that the authority had no operable semi-trucks or compactors. The inspectors witnessed trash from the city being loaded manually from curbside containers into pickup trucks, and then taken to the facility, where it was being dumped on the ground. That dumping creates an imminent threat of disease and other dangers to public health. The action also violates a number of Solid Waste Rules, including having blowing litter, creating issues related to insect and rodent harborage, creating a public nuisance and having unapproved storage methods.

The department's Solid Waste Bureau issued a Notice of Violation to the authority Oct. 5 that alleged several violations of state Solid Waste Rules and advising the authority that the department may seek enforcement, including the issuance of an Administrative Compliance Order.

The injunction seeks the immediate closure of the La Loma Transfer Station and requires the city and the authority to stop dumping waste at the facility or any place other than a licensed landfill.

For more information, call Marissa Bardino at (505) 827-0314.