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NEWS RELEASE

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Health Inspector Impersonators Contacting New Mexico Businesses

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has received multiple reports from food establishments across the state of individuals impersonating health inspectors. The individuals often call the food establishment and utilize multiple techniques to convince owners of the validity of the call including providing names and inspector id numbers. The callers often state a new inspector has been assigned to the establishment and then attempt to set up an inspection time that may require food establishment owners to call a number and enter a pin to confirm the inspection time.

Food establishment owners should never give business or personal information to callers or visitors claiming to be health inspectors. NMED would like to make food establishments aware of the following criteria which will help identify legitimate inspectors:

- Inspectors must present a state-issued photo identification before conducting an inspection
- Inspectors never accept cash payment for inspections. Permit fee must be paid by a check or money order made payable to the "New Mexico Environment Department."
- Inspectors do not charge for grade emblems, permits, or food safety signs

When in doubt, NMED encourages food establishments to verify the identity of health inspectors by calling the nearest environment department field office. Food Establishment owners are also encouraged to call their local law enforcement agency if the validity of a call or visit is in doubt. NMED Field Office contact information can be found at:

<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/contact.htm>

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