

**SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR**David Martin, *Cabinet Secretary*Butch Tongate, *Acting Deputy Secretary***NEWS RELEASE****OCTOBER 4, 2011**

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Environment Department Seeks Input on Septic Tank Rules

Santa Fe -- The New Mexico Environment Department (“NMED”) wants to make the Liquid Waste “Septic Tank” rules friendlier to homeowners and businesses. Proposed amendments to current regulations would also be less costly to administer.

Today, the department announced it will hold 18 public meetings around the state to receive input from homeowners, contractors, realtors and homebuilders on how to improve the Liquid Waste Disposal and Treatment Regulations (20.7.3 NMAC). NMED is also looking to update and amend Liquid Waste Treatment and Disposal Fees Regulations (20.7.11 NMAC).

“Governor Martinez and the New Mexico Environment Department are committed to making sure that regulations are based on good science and common sense,” said NMED Secretary David Martin. “The challenge with the Liquid Waste Program is to issue permits that protect groundwater, and are not unreasonably burdensome, at 4,000 unique sites each year in a state with diverse and complex hydrogeology. We want to hear what the community has to say about how to improve our permitting process without compromising water quality.”

The department wants to move from a “one-size-fits-all” permitting program to a mapping system which would identify areas with high and low hydrogeologic sensitivity. Depending on the hydrogeologic sensitivity, more or less stringent standards could be applied. Other rule amendments would pave the way for online permitting and fee payment which would save everyone time and money.

Under the proposed amendments, a voluntary certification program would provide incentives for contractors to take annual training which would increase the expertise of the workforce. As a result of the annual training, higher quality septic systems would be installed all around the state.

The Department wishes to obtain stakeholder input on these issues prior to filing a formal petition for proposed regulation amendments with the Environmental Improvement Board (EIB). Drafts of the NMED regulation amendments are posted on the Department's Liquid Waste Program website at this location <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/fod/LiquidWaste/>. We invite you to review these drafts and to submit written comments. Comments should be submitted by close of business on Friday, November 4, 2011, to Brian Schall, NMED Liquid Waste Program, 5500 San Antonio Drive NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109. Mr. Schall also may be reached at 505-222-9513 or at brian.schall@state.nm.us.

The New Mexico Environment Department will host a series of public meetings to discuss possible regulation amendments. Liquid waste system installers, inspectors, septage pumpers, homebuilders, realtors and other interested stakeholders are invited to attend and to provide their comments and suggestions on what amendments should be made.

LIST OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

- **Alamogordo** – Wednesday, October 5, 2011, 11:30 a.m. – New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 1900 N. White Sands Boulevard
- **Angel Fire** – Tuesday, October 25, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – Angel Fire Community Center, 15 CS Ranch Road
- **Carlsbad** – Wednesday, October 19, 2011, 11:30 a.m. – New Mexico State University Carlsbad, 1500 University Drive, Room 106
- **Clovis** – Monday, October 17, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – NMED Clovis Field Office, 100 East Manana Blvd., Unit 3
- **Espanola** – Wednesday, October 26, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – Rio Arriba County Commission Chambers, 1122 Industrial Park Road
- **Farmington** – Wednesday, October 12, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – Farmington Civic Center, 200 West Arrington Street, Meeting Room C
- **Hobbs** – Tuesday, October 18, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – New Mexico Junior College, 5317 Lovington Highway, Training Room 125
- **Las Cruces** – Wednesday, October 5, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – Public Health Building, 1170 North Solano Drive, Room 1101
- **Las Vegas** – Monday, October 24, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – Luna Community College, 366 Luna Drive, Student Services Conference Room
- **Los Lunas** – Thursday, September 29, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – Los Lunas Teacher Resource Center, Los Lunas Elementary School Campus, 801 Coronado St
- **Moriarty** – Thursday, October 20, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – Moriarty Civic Center, 202 Broadway
- **Rio Rancho** – Thursday, October 13, 2011, 6:30 p.m., Sabana Grande Recreation Center, 4110 Sabana Grande Ave.
- **Roswell** – Wednesday, October 19, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell, Campus Union Building, 48 University Blvd., Room 110
- **Ruidoso** – Tuesday, October 4, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – Village of Ruidoso Council Chambers, 313 Cree Meadows Drive
- **Silver City** – Thursday, October 6, 2011, 6:30 p.m. – Silver City Annex Building, 1203 North Hudson, Suite # 2
- **Socorro** – Friday, October 7, 2011, 12:00 noon – NMED Socorro Field Office, 198 Neel Avenue

- **Taos** – Wednesday, October 26, 2011, 11:30 a.m. – Juan I. Gonzales Agricultural Center, 202 Chamisa Road
- **Tucumcari** – Monday, October 17, 2011, 1:00 p.m. – Tucumcari Convention Center, 1500 West Historic Route 66

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