

**SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR**David Martin, *Cabinet Secretary*Butch Tongate, *Deputy Secretary***NEWS RELEASE****September 13, 2012**

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**NMED to Host Public Meetings on New Proposed Copper Mine Rules**

The New Mexico Environment Department will be holding two public meetings to present proposed new rules to protect water quality at copper mine facilities. The meetings will be held on September 25 in Albuquerque and September 26 in Silver City.

These new rules are required because of legislative changes to the New Mexico Water Quality Act. In 2009 the legislature amended the Water Quality Act to require that the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission adopt specific rules for the copper mine industry. The rules must specify the measures to be taken to prevent water pollution and to monitor water quality. The purpose of the rules is to provide the copper mining industry with clearly defined requirements for preventing ground water and surface water pollution and ensuring regulatory compliance rather than determining all such requirements on a case-by-case basis.

Since January of 2012, the Department has conducted extensive technical and advisory group meetings with industry, governmental and public interest groups to seek input in the development and the content of proposed copper mine rules. These meetings were conducted in accordance with a schedule approved by the Commission. A draft of proposed copper mine rules was made available to the public on September 13<sup>th</sup>.

All interested persons are invited to attend the public meetings to learn about the proposed rules, ask questions and provide comments for the Department's consideration. The September 25 meeting will be held from 6:00 -7:30 PM at the Cesar Chavez Community Center at 7505 Kathryn SE, Albuquerque. The September 26 meeting will be held from 7:00-9:00 PM at the Western New Mexico University Besse-Forward Global Resource Center Auditorium, located at the corner of Kentucky and 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Silver City.

Copies of the proposed regulations are available on the Environment Department's website at:

<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/gwb/NMED-GWQB-CopperRegulationDevelopment.htm>

Individuals who are unable to attend the meetings or otherwise wish may submit written comments to the Department by October 12<sup>th</sup>. Written comments on the proposed copper mine rule may be submitted to the Department at the following address:

New Mexico Environment Department  
Ground Water Quality Bureau  
Attn: Kurt Vollbrecht  
P.O. Box 5469  
Santa Fe, NM 87502-5469

Or via email at [kurt.vollbrecht@state.nm.us](mailto:kurt.vollbrecht@state.nm.us)

For more information, you may contact Kurt Vollbrecht at 505-827-0195 or Bill Olson at 505-466-2969.

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