



SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR

David Martin, *Cabinet Secretary*

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NEWS RELEASE

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Environment Department Inspector Named “Environmentalist of the Year”

Eugene Knight Played Key Role in Little Bear Fire Response

(Santa Fe, NM) – New Mexico Environment Department Health Inspector Eugene Knight recently received the Environmentalist of the Year Award by the New Mexico Health Association for his outstanding service to the environmental health inspection field.

“We’d like to extend our congratulations to Eugene Knight on winning this distinguished award,” said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary David Martin. “This is a well-deserved recognition for Eugene’s tireless work on behalf of New Mexico residents.”



Environmental Health Bureau Chief Frank Fiore (L) congratulates Eugene Knight (R) on his “Environmentalist of the Year” Award

Mr. Knight, who lives in the Ruidoso area, has been a department employee for 10 years and still conducts many inspections, in addition to his current role as Acting State Pool Program Manager. During his time, Mr. Knight has participated in numerous emergency responses in the Lincoln area including the 2008 Dolly flood event and the 2010 Big Freeze event. Mr. Knight was also one of the early and longest serving responders to the Ruidoso Community during the recent Little Bear forest fire that destroyed hundreds of homes near Ruidoso this year.

“I appreciate receiving this award, but also feel that a lot of other people deserve it as much as I do,” said Eugene Knight. “I just try to keep in mind what any of our NMED health inspectors would do for their communities in time of need and look beyond our regular duties to help people out.”

Environmental Health Bureau Chief Frank Fiore describes Mr. Knight as an extremely dedicated and effective inspector who cares a lot about the public. “Eugene always puts top priority in protecting the health and well-being of NM citizens, as well as the businesses and communities they depend on,” said Fiore. “Eugene’s philosophy is to regulate using technical assistance, education and friendly persuasion, with enforcement only as a last resort.”

The New Mexico Environmental Health Association Environmentalist of the Year Award is an annual award that is given to a person, public or private, that contributes significantly to the environmental health field in New Mexico.

The New Mexico Environmental Health Association Environmentalist of the Year Award was accepted on Mr. Knight’s behalf by New Mexico Environment Department District 1 Manager Bill Chavez earlier this fall, as Mr. Knight was not able to attend due to his wife’s illness.

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