



GARY E. JOHNSON
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Harold Runnels Building
1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502
Telephone (505) 827-2918
Fax (505) 827-2965



PETER MAGGIORE
SECRETARY

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Contact: Darwin Pattengale, Manager, District 4, NMED
Phone: (505) 624-6046 or Cell: (505) 301-2400
Contact: Cathy Tyson, Communications Director
Phone: (505) 827-0314

Environment Department No Longer Permitting Open-Burning in Southern New Mexico

(Santa Fe, NM) – In response to extreme fire danger and strained fire-fighting resources, the New Mexico Environment Department today has temporarily stopped issuing open-burn permits in the southern half of the state, and has voided permits that have been issued with future burn dates for southern New Mexico.

Specific counties where open burning is no longer permitted include: Catron, Grant, Hidalgo, Luna, Dona Ana, Sierra, Otero, Lincoln, Chaves, Eddy, Lea, Roosevelt, De Baca, Curry, Quay and Guadalupe.

The Department is on the verge of banning open burning in the northern half of the state as well, but will wait to see if the current storm in northern New Mexico provides enough precipitation to warrant further delay.

State Air Quality Regulations allow open burning for limited purposes. Open-burn permits are issued by the Department to homeowners, usually for the burning of yard trimmings and to reduce fire hazards. The Department limits the time of day during which the burn can occur, and also may limit the size of burn piles and prohibit the use of accelerants such as gasoline.

The Department will again issue open-burn permits when conditions are such that the Secretary determines that open burning will not compromise the health or welfare of the citizens of New Mexico.

For additional information, please contact Darwin Pattengale, Manager, District 4, NMED, at (505) 624-6046, or Cathy Tyson, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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