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Environment Department Secures Funding for Española Superfund Clean Up, Bids Sought for Construction

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has received funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to begin construction of a remediation system to clean up the North Railroad Avenue Plume Superfund site in Española.

The North Railroad Avenue Plume site consists of contaminated groundwater in the vicinity of the Norge Town Dry Cleaner and Laundromat facility. The contaminants, tetrachloroethylene (PCE) and trichloroethylene (TCE) are dry cleaning solvents. The contamination plume extends approximately ¾ mile from North Railroad Avenue to the Rio Grande and is about 800 feet wide. Parts of the plume extend to 260 feet below ground surface.

“With this funding we will get working on this problem quickly,” said NMED Secretary Ron Curry. “Cleaning up this groundwater will help protect the health of citizens in Española and Santa Clara Pueblo as well as return millions of gallons of groundwater to constructive use.”

The aquifer in which the plume is located is the only source of drinking water for the City of Española and Santa Clara Pueblo and the plume has forced the closure of two City of Española municipal drinking water wells. Other water wells in the vicinity are being monitored and have shown no adverse impacts from the plume. No contamination has been detected in the Rio Grande or in acequia or arroyo water that overlies the contaminated ground water.

To begin the clean up process, NMED will release an Invitation to Bid for the construction of the remediation system in mid-December. Construction of the system is planned for early March. NMED will hold a public meeting prior to the start of construction to discuss the remediation system.

The North Railroad Avenue Plume site has been on the federal Superfund list since January 1999.

For further information, contact Mike Huber, NMED Project Manager at (505) 476-3777, or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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