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## **Public Invited to Help Improve New Mexico's Air at Free Smoke Management Workshop in Farmington**

(Santa Fe, NM) — In order to better familiarize the public with changes to the state's smoke management and open burning regulations and their long-term benefits to New Mexico's air quality, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) is hosting a free workshop **Monday, April 12 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at the Civic Center, Exhibition Hall 1, in Farmington.**

The open burning regulation applies to burning of trash in burn barrels as well as burning of vegetative material. Burning of trash in burn barrels will no longer be allowed beginning June 1. Burning of vegetative material is allowed with restrictions. This regulation applies to all lands in New Mexico except for Bernalillo County and tribal lands, which have their own air quality regulations and agencies.

The New Mexico smoke management regulation was developed in response to federal and state air quality requirements, and applies to all vegetation burning. NMED, working with a diverse group of stakeholders including federal and state land managers, ranchers, farmers, and environmental interests, developed the Smoke Management Program over a six-month period.

"Agricultural and other burning has a rich heritage in the State of New Mexico," said Sandra Ely, Chief of NMED's Air Quality Bureau. "For this reason we solicited input from a broad segment of New Mexico's burn community in developing this program. We feel that this has led to a fair and reasonable program that meets the needs of New Mexico's farm and ranch interests while keeping our air clean and healthy."

Air Quality Bureau staff will be available at the workshop to explain the program and respond to questions. Everyone who burns is encouraged to attend.

For more information, contact Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Director, at (505) 827-0314.

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