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Environment Department, New Mexico Recycling Coalition Announce Plans for Recycling Awareness Month

(Santa Fe, NM) — **Recycling drives for cell phones and Styrofoam** as well as a **recycling education campaign** in New Mexico schools are just three events that the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) and New Mexico Recycling Coalition (NMRC) have planned for November, New Mexico Recycling Awareness Month.

During November NMED and NMRC will hold public events to educate residents, businesses and municipalities about recycling, buying recycled products, waste reduction and composting. New Mexico Recycling Awareness Month (http://www.nmrecycle.org/NMRAM_2003.htm) is held annually in conjunction with national America Recycles Day, which this year will be held on November 15th (www.americarecyclesday.org).

“The benefit of recycling is a no-brainer,” said NMED Secretary Ron Curry. “It saves space in the landfill and reduces demand on our resources. I hope that through the activities planned for this month we can make recycling an engrained part of our culture, as much of a given for New Mexicans as green chile.”

Events include:

Recycled cell phones will be collected across the state during November and sent to the Women’s Community Association in Albuquerque, who will receive cash credit from a refurbishing company for each phone. These funds will be used to support the battered women’s shelter.

Recycled Styrofoam will be collected statewide by Rastra New Mexico, an Albuquerque-based company. Rastra is an environmental wall system made from 85% recycled Styrofoam and cement that results in energy efficient and long-lasting buildings.

Recycling presentations at elementary schools are also a new component of NMRAM this year. State coordinators plan to visit a dozen local schools to make presentations or give tours of their recycling facilities.

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“Educating kids about recycling is very important.” explains Nancy Judd NMRC Executive Director “Participating schools receive an ‘Educator’s Recycling Kit’ with lesson ideas and a fun PowerPoint presentation to designed to engage kids with fun recycling ideas.”

In addition to these events, at least 20 municipalities around the state will sponsor recycling activities throughout November. The fifth annual **Santa Fe Recycled Art and Fashion Show** (www.recyclesantafe.org) will be held November 21-23. In **Gallup**, the McKinley Citizens’ Recycling Council has recycling related movie showings, a recycling center drop-off event, school visits, landfill tours, recycling industry speakers and demos, as well as an ink cartridge and cell phone drive.

New Mexico Recycling Awareness Month is organized by the NMRC, in conjunction with NMED’s Solid Waste Bureau. Sponsors include: the U.S. Department of Energy Waste Management Division, Intel, McCune Charitable Foundation, New Mexico Soft Drink Association, Duratek Federal Services, Rastra NM, Keep New Mexico Beautiful and Eberline Services.

The NMRC (www.nmrecycle.org) is a not-for-profit organization made up of municipalities, businesses, tribes, federal and state agencies, non-profits and individuals. Its mission is to improve the quality of recycling and waste reduction in New Mexico.

For more information about Recycling Awareness Month, contact English Bird at (505) 466-2456 or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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