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**CHAVES COUNTY, ROSWELL AND STATE ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
REQUEST FEDERAL FUNDING FOR
GROUND-WATER CONTAMINATION CLEAN-UP**

(Santa Fe, NM) – On Tuesday, August 7, the Chaves County Commission, with the support of Roswell Mayor Bill Owen, will present a resolution to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) in support of the federal Environmental Protection Agency placing the South Roswell PCE Plume on the Superfund National Priorities List for clean-up. Environment Secretary Peter Maggiore will receive the document on the steps of the County Courthouse, located at 5th and Main streets, at 10 a.m.

The South Roswell ground water contaminant plume is caused by perchloroethylene (PCE) – caused by improper disposal at a dry cleaner that operated from 1956 to 1963. The plume originates near the intersection of Main and McGaffey streets and extends about one mile toward the southeast, just beyond Atkinson Avenue.

The federal Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for drinking water supplies is 5 micrograms per liter of PCE. Samples of ground water have found PCE concentrations at 260 micrograms per liter. In 1995 the state provided funds to connect three residences to the municipal water supply after their domestic wells showed contamination of PCE below the MCL.

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The NMED considers placing the site on the Superfund National Priorities List the most effective way to clean up the site. Investigation and clean-up of similar sites have cost millions, to tens of millions, of dollars; and there is no viable responsible party to pay for remediation.

The federal Superfund program is designed to support clean-up of sites when viable responsible parties do not exist. The money in the federal trust fund comes from a tax on the chemical and petroleum industries. If the site is cleaned up using Superfund, the state will be responsible for contributing a 10 percent match.

For more information, please contact Darwin Pattengale, NMED, District 4 Manager, at (505) 624-6046, or George Schuman, NMED, Superfund Program Manager at (505) 827-0072.

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