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**PETER MAGGIORE**  
SECRETARY

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**Septic Tank Fees About to Take Affect**

(Santa Fe, NM) -- The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) will be charging fees for inspecting and permitting liquid waste disposal (septic) systems, and certifying septic tank designs, beginning February 1. The money raised from the fees will be used to better assure that sewage, which contains disease causing organisms and pollution, is disposed of properly, thus reducing public contact with sewage and protecting water supplies from contamination

“The greatest threats to our rivers and streams, as well as to our drinking water, are improperly installed, mismanaged and malfunctioning septic systems,” said Environment Secretary Peter Maggiore. “The effort to improve New Mexico’s septic systems is one of the most important steps we have taken for the protection of water and human health in many years.”

Last year the NMED issued approximately 5,200 liquid-waste permits for new septic systems. The soon-to-be-implemented fees for such permits and inspections will generate revenue that will be used to fund a statewide trainer, a financial analyst position in Santa Fe, and five new inspector positions in the fastest growing areas of the state, including San Juan, Santa Fe, Dona Ana, Luna, Sandoval, Valencia and Torrance counties.

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Beginning February 1, the fee for a permit will be \$100 for the construction of a conventional residential system and \$50 for a modification or repair of an existing conventional residential system. The fee for construction, modification or repair of a commercial system will be \$150. The fee for construction of an advanced or alternative treatment system will be \$150; and a permit to modify or repair an advanced or alternative treatment system will be \$75. Installers who do not pass an inspection and receive a notice of non-approval, know as a red tag, will be charged a \$50 re-inspection fee. A fee of \$50 will also be charged for a variance from the regulation.

By comparison, the average fee assessed by neighboring states for the installation of a new residential septic system is \$210. Bernalillo County currently charges \$100 for this service.

Permits for onsite liquid waste systems can be obtained from any of the 23 NMED field offices located throughout the state. Fees can only be paid by personal check, business check or money order. Cash cannot be accepted. Fees are non-refundable.

The New Mexico Environmental Improvement Board passed the regulation November 9, 2001, providing for the soon-to-be-implemented liquid waste treatment and disposal system fees.

For more information regarding liquid waste disposal permits and the new fees, contact, Steve Walker at (505) 827-1400, ext. 1004 or the nearest NMED field office.

For more information, contact Steve Walker, NMED Field Operations, at (505) 827-1400 x.1004, or Cathy Tyson, Communications Director, NMED, at (505) 827-0314.

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