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Environment Department Issues Compliance Order and Proposed Penalty of \$257,168 to Savoy Travel Center near Deming for Groundwater Discharge Violations

(Santa Fe) — The New Mexico Environment Department issued an administrative compliance order with possible penalties of \$257,158 to Savoy Travel Center near Deming for discharging sewage effluent into a storm water drainage area without a permit.

The order states Savoy, which provides fuel, shower, and restaurant services to members of the public, modified its discharge system so that sewage effluent flowed to a storm water impoundment. The modifications posed threats to ground water and public health near the gas station and restaurant.

“We are concerned about the potential effects of this sewage on groundwater,” said NMED Deputy Secretary Cindy Padilla. “This business owner violated state laws and state permits that are intended to protect the health of residents and the environment.”

NMED’s Environmental Health Division discovered on April 7 that Savoy added above ground pipes to three holding tanks and the facility was discharging sewage effluent to the storm water impoundment.

The business violated the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission Regulations and the New Mexico Water Quality Act by discharging wastewater without a permit, failing to report a spill and modifying an existing sewage system without consent from NMED.

NMED’s Ground Water Quality Bureau notified new owners of the business in March 2006 that the facility required a discharge permit. The bureau issued a Temporary Permission to Discharge to the business April 6, 2006. That permission gave Savoy 120 days to submit a Discharge Permit application to NMED. The business did not submit an application to NMED.

The company can request a hearing or contact NMED to discuss settlement. Savoy must also submit a response to NMED by Sept. 7.

For more information, contact Marissa Stone at (505) 827-0314.

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