

SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNORDavid Martin, *Cabinet Secretary*Raj Solomon, P.E., *Deputy Secretary***NEWS RELEASE****May 19, 2011****Contact:** Jill Turner, Communications Coordinator (505)222-9548 / jill.turner@state.nm.us**Environment Department Receives Plans to Investigate Groundwater Contamination at Cheyenne II and Wild West Farms Dairies in Dexter**

The New Mexico Environment Department has received two Stage 1 Abatement Plan proposals to investigate soil and groundwater pollution at Cheyenne II and Wild West Farms Dairies near Dexter in Chaves County, New Mexico.

The Department's Ground Water Quality Bureau required Cheyenne II and Wild West Farms Dairies, located at 207 E. Calusa and 124 E. Anasazi respectively, to submit the plans to address soil and groundwater pollution associated with their operations.

Wastewater from both dairies is discharged to separate synthetically lined lagoons and applied to crops through pivot and flood irrigation. Groundwater is sampled regularly through monitoring wells and is contaminated with nitrate, chloride, and total dissolved solids (TDS) at levels exceeding the New Mexico groundwater quality standards of 10 parts per million (mg/l) for nitrate, 250 mg/l for chloride, and 1,000 mg/l for TDS. At Cheyenne II Dairy, maximum concentrations detected of nitrate, chloride, and TDS are 21 mg/l, 280 mg/l, and 5,300 mg/l. At Wild West Farms Dairy, maximum concentrations detected of nitrate, chloride, and TDS are 30 mg/l, 580 mg/l, and 9,700 mg/l.

The Stage 1 Abatement Plans submitted by the dairies propose an investigation of soil and groundwater pollution through the collection of soil and groundwater samples, the installation of additional monitoring wells, and the sampling of nearby supply wells. The purpose of a Stage 1 investigation is to define the extent of soil and groundwater pollution at a site where groundwater contamination has been identified. New Mexico's Water Quality Control Commission's regulations require responsible parties to remediate groundwater pollution. Once the Stage 1 Abatement Plan has been completed at each dairy, a proposed Stage 2 Abatement Plan will be submitted to NMED outlining proposed actions to clean up the pollution that was identified as a result of the investigation. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the Stage 2 Plan and may also request a hearing. The department will seek public comment within 90 days of receiving the plan.

To review or request a copy of the proposed Stage 1 Abatement Plans please contact:

Ray Montes
NMED Ground Water Quality Bureau
1170 N. Solano, Suite M
Las Cruces, NM 88001
ray.montes@state.nm.us
(575) 647-7932

For more information, call Jill Turner at (505) 222-9548

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