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Environment Department Awards \$150,000 Grant to Acoma Pueblo for Tire Recycling *Recycled Tires Will Be Used to Build Running Track*

(Santa Fe, NM) The New Mexico Environment Department awarded a \$150,000 grant to Pueblo of Acoma this month to recycle used tires that will be used to build a running track for the tribe.

The department's Solid Waste Bureau awarded the Recycling and Illegal Dumping grant to the pueblo's Environmental Protection Office to construct a walking and running from at least 95 percent shredded scrap tires from New Mexico.

"The illegal dumping of tires is a problem in our state that mars the landscape and sometimes clogs rivers and streams," said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. "The grant program enables communities to pay for the disposal tires that are difficult to dump or to develop creative projects like Acoma's."

This is the first time a tire recycling grant was offered to a pueblo. The project, which will begin soon, will convert tires into a track that will serve 4,819 members of the pueblo.

The state Legislature passed the Tire Recycling Act in 1994 to prevent and clean up tire dumps and to promote environmentally sound methods to recycle scrap tires. That act created the Tire Recycling Fund, which diverts .50 cents from vehicle registration fees.

Municipalities, counties, tribal governments, land grant communities, cooperative associations, and solid waste authorities around the state can apply for the grant money to clean up illegal tire dumps and stockpiles, purchase equipment and supplies for creating tire recycling facilities, and to construct projects using scrap tires.

The department awarded 34 grants since 1996 that have been used to clean up more than 35 tire dumps, create and maintain 17 tire recycling facilities, and design and construct ten projects using tire bales. The department has awarded more than \$4,442,605 in grant money since 1996. Municipalities, counties, tribal governments, land grant communities, and cooperative associations, and solid waste authorities interested in applying for a tire recycling grant should contact Toni Duggan at 827-0559 or toni.duggan@state.nm.us, or visit <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/SWB/tires.htm>.

For more information, call Marissa Stone at (505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475.

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