



Bill Richardson  
Governor

**NEW MEXICO  
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**

*Office of the Secretary*

Harold Runnels Building  
1190 Saint Francis Drive (87505)  
PO Box 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502  
Phone (505) 827-2855 Fax (505) 827-2836  
[www.nmenv.state.nm.us](http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us)



Ron Curry  
Secretary  
Jon Goldstein  
Deputy Secretary

February 25, 2009  
For Immediate Release

Contact: Marissa Stone, NMED Communications Director  
(505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475

**Environment Department Receives Plan to Investigate Groundwater Contamination at  
Helena Chemical Co. in Lake Arthur, N.M.**

*State Requires Company to Investigate and Clean Up Contamination*

(Santa Fe, N.M.) The New Mexico Environment Department's Ground Water Quality Bureau received a Stage 1 Abatement Plan proposal to investigate groundwater contamination at Helena Chemical Co. in Lake Arthur, N.M.

The facility had unauthorized discharges of dry and liquid fertilizers and an herbicide at the property.

"The plan ensures Helena investigates and cleans up groundwater pollution to protect local residents and the environment," said Environmental Protection Division Director Jim Norton.

The company, at 504 Lake Arthur Highway, sells and stores agricultural chemicals such as fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides at the property. Crop seeds, including corn, cotton, and alfalfa, are also sold. Chemicals are not manufactured at the facility.

NMED required the company to submit a Stage 1 Abatement Plan proposal in November 2008. The company installed 13 soil borings and six wells to monitor groundwater at the facility. Water samples from those wells detected contamination of nitrate, chloride, sulfate, fluoride, and total dissolved solids contamination in groundwater above state ground water standards. The depth to ground water across the site ranges from approximately 20 to 25 feet below ground surface.

The Stage 1 Abatement Plan proposes the installation of monitoring wells and the collection of additional soil and groundwater samples to define the extent of soil and groundwater contamination.

New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission regulations require responsible parties to investigate and remediate groundwater pollution. After the initial investigation is completed, Helena must submit a Stage 2 cleanup proposal to NMED. Helena is required to issue a public notice for the Stage 2 cleanup proposal will be issued within 30 days of submitting the proposal to NMED. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the Stage 2 cleanup proposal and request a hearing or meeting. Written public comment will be sought by NMED within 60 days of determining that the cleanup proposal is administratively complete.

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

###