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**Environmental Improvement Board Revises Petroleum Storage Tank Regulations**

*Revisions Make Rules Easier to Read, Allow Contamination from Leaking Underground Petroleum Tanks to be Addressed More Quickly*

(Santa Fe, NM) – Revisions to the New Mexico Environment Department’s Petroleum Storage Tank Regulations went into effect this week. The revised rules, which include formatting changes that make the rules more user-friendly, will also create a more efficient process to address petroleum storage tank contamination.

The main reason for the rule revisions was to add a new Part 18 on Operator Training, which is required by the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005.

“The changes will also allow the department’s Petroleum Storage Tank Bureau to more efficiently and effectively administer the Corrective Action Fund,” said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. “The revisions will not change or reduce the number of cleanups the department undertakes but will make it easier and faster to address petroleum contamination from leaking tanks.”

The fund is used to investigate and remediate petroleum contamination arising from regulated storage tanks. The regulations change Parts 1, 7, 10, and 12-17 that allow greater efficiency with which to address contamination through the Corrective Action Fund and provide new application mechanisms for the regulated community.

“New Mexico is well ahead of other states in adopting the operator training changes,” said Environmental Protection Division Director Jim Norton. “That part of the regulations will phase in required training of storage tank operators to ensure they understand environmental and emergency response requirements for facilities they operate.”

Federal regulations required states to adopt those changes by August 8. New Mexico was the tenth state to adopt the revisions. Secretary Curry and the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Board adopted those revisions in April.

The Energy Policy Act mandated another change that would prevent the delivery of gasoline to storage tanks that do not comply with measures to prevent leaks. That provision requires state legislative action to implement. A bill to achieve that, Senate Bill 16, passed the New Mexico Legislature's Senate and the House Energy Committee this year but ran out of time in the House Business and Industry Committee. The bill will be reintroduced next year.

To review the revised rules, go to the Petroleum Storage Tank Bureau ("PSTB") Web page ([www.nmenv.state.nm.us/ust](http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/ust)) and click on "PST Regulations (proposed)" along the left margin. The approved new rules effective June 15 are at the top of the page. For more information on the new rules, contact Jennifer Pruett at 505-476-4392.

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