



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

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

**Environment Department Issues Compliance Order with \$4,500 Penalty to Quail Ridge Water and Sewer LLC. in Taos for Violations Related to Wastewater System that Will Serve Developing Area in Taos**

(Santa Fe, NM) The New Mexico Environment Department issued a compliance order with a proposed penalty of \$4,500 to Quail Ridge Water and Sewer, LLC. in Taos for violating its state permit by failing to meet deadlines for its wastewater treatment system. The system will serve a developing area in Taos. David Buck, the Owner of the Quail Ridge Water and Sewer LLC., failed to meet Ground Water Quality Discharge Permit deadlines related to the closure of an old sewage system and the construction a new wastewater treatment system.

“Numerous parties, including Taos County, were involved in negotiating the modification of the permit and the schedule for the system,” said New Mexico Environment Department Water and Waste Division Director Marcy Leavitt. “The owner’s failure to respect those deadlines has resulted in the discharge of lower quality water from the system into the ground.”

Many residents and local government agencies were interested in the permit modification process for the system, which serves several residential complexes and will serve other areas in the future. Those involved wanted to ensure the permit was protective of their health and the environment.

The department approved a modification permit for the system in May 2007 for the construction of the new multi-phase system. The permit required that system to be installed by November 2007.

The department issued a notice of violation to Buck on April 10 following several attempts of gaining voluntary compliance for permit violations from the operator of the system. That notice required him to complete the construction of the first phase of the system by May 1. He did not meet that deadline either.

The system, under its modified permit, is authorized to discharge up to 80,000 gallons a day of domestic wastewater to its treatment system. Treated wastewater is then discharged to subsurface disposal fields or reused for irrigating the grounds of the condominium. Liquid waste from Quail Ridge Casas, La Vida Feliz and El Parque condominiums nearby also flows into that system.

Mr. Buck must fulfill corrective actions in the order, including completing the construction of the first phase of the system and closing the old system within 45 days. If he fails to comply with the order, it could result in additional civil penalties of up to \$25,000 per day.

Mr. Buck can contact the department to request a hearing or discuss a settlement.

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

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