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Governor

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Governor Richardson Proclaims November 15 “New Mexico Recycling Awareness Day”
State Aims to Exceed National Average of 32.5 Percent Recycling Rate

(Santa Fe, NM) – Governor Richardson proclaimed November 15 “New Mexico Recycling Awareness Day” to raise awareness about the state’s commitment to persevering resources and reducing waste in landfills.

“I encourage New Mexicans to rededicate themselves to using our resources more wisely by recycling and reusing materials they purchase,” Governor Richardson said in the proclamation.

“Recycling saves valuable landfill space and helps conserve energy,” said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. “Our state now recycles 11 percent of its Municipal Solid Waste compared with four to five percent earlier this decade.”

The proclamation recognizes the state’s goal of meeting or exceeding the national average of a 32.5 percent recycling rate. The New Mexico Recycling Coalition leads a campaign that calls for a 33 percent recycling rate in the state by 2012.

“Recycling is the easiest way for an individual to make a difference for the planet,” said English Bird, executive director of the New Mexico Recycling Coalition. “When you recycle paper, fewer trees need to be harvested -- when you recycle metals, less mining occurs. And by recycling plastic you’re reducing the need for oil and natural gas.”

Residents can begin making a difference today by implementing a home recycling system to sort mixed paper, cardboard, plastic bottles and aluminum and steel cans. Most communities in the state have programs that recycle those items (visit www.recyclenewmexico.com). Residents can also reduce waste by carrying shopping bags and coffee mugs with them, avoiding nonrecyclable packaging and making double-sided copies. Those interested in making a difference can also start a backyard composting program for yard clippings and food scraps (www.recyclenewmexico.com/pdf/Backyard-Composting.pdf.)

The Environment Department’s recycling grant program – created by the Recycling and Illegal Dumping Act of 2005 -- awarded 36 grants in the past two years, including \$385,000 in 2007 and \$260,000 this year. This year’s grants provided money for recycling and illegal dumping initiatives in 10 communities around the state.

The department also doubled the amount of recyclables diverted from landfills at the Runnels Building, the department's headquarters and the state's largest office building. The department created changes in its new Solid Waste Rules in August to encourage more communities and companies to enhance or create more recycling and composting operations.

Nov. 15 is also America Recycles Day. Residents can pledge to recycle as part of the national America Recycles Day November 15th campaign (www.americarecyclesday.org).

For more information, call Marissa Stone at (505) 827-0314 or visit the department's recycling Web site at www.nmenv.state.nm.us/SWB/recycling.htm.

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