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Environment Department Issues Compliance Order With Proposed Penalty of \$10,500 to Rockview Dairy in Hobbs

(Santa Fe, NM) – The New Mexico Environment Department issued a compliance order with a proposed penalty of \$10,500 to Rockview Dairy in Hobbs for failing to meet a deadline to install monitoring wells that detect groundwater conditions below the dairy. Those wells are a requirement of the dairy’s permit with the department.

The dairy, at 12923 North Knowles Road, lies near several residences with drinking water wells that could be affected by discharges from the dairy. Rick Schaap, the owner of the dairy, failed to install the wells within the mandatory timeframe after detailed discussions and meetings with the department.

“Rockview’s failure to install the monitoring wells on time is troubling and very disappointing particularly because we met with the owners of the dairy and explained necessary steps to meet state requirements,” said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. “Rockview has not only failed to comply with the state, it has also turned its back on local residents who want to know if their drinking water is safe.”

The owner of the dairy had begun the process of installing the wells. State Water Quality Control Commission Regulations require dairy owners to install monitoring wells to detect whether pollution prevention measures at the facility protect public health, groundwater and surface water.

The department’s Ground Water Quality Bureau issued a notice of violation to Rockview on March 11 for violating its permit by failing to install four monitoring wells by May 10. The owner of the dairy requested and received an extension that revised the installation deadline to Oct. 6. The dairy failed to ensure that existing pollution prevention measures are effective and failed to show whether water standards, including nitrate levels, are adequate to protect public health and ensure drinking water remains clean.

The state Water Quality Act and state regulations allow the department to assess a civil penalty for the violation.

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