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**Environment Department Begins Cleanup of Contaminated Plume at Former Dry
Cleaning Business Site in Roswell**

Work Will Protect Groundwater from Pollution, Residents from Harm

(Santa Fe, NM) – The New Mexico Environment Department will begin a project today to remove and dispose of hazardous waste from a former dry cleaning business site that could be contributing to a release of chlorinated solvents into groundwater in Roswell.

The department's Ground Water Quality Bureau, which discovered two in-ground concrete tanks at 1400 W. Second St. during routine groundwater sampling, determined that those tanks are probably releasing hazardous waste from the former dry cleaning business site into surrounding soils.

"This work includes removing the tanks, their contents and any heavily contaminated subsurface soils to protect groundwater in the area from contamination and to guard residents from harm," said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. "We are fortunate that our Ground Water Quality Bureau's sampling work helped uncover tanks that could be polluting the site."

The bureau discovered the tanks during sampling activities associated with chlorinated solvent groundwater contamination at the West Second Street and North Montana Avenue Site. The 1400 W. Second St. property housed a former dry cleaning business considered to be a potential source of the chlorinated solvent groundwater plume. The bureau had the contents of tanks analyzed for volatile organic compounds in June and August. Analytical results found that sludge in Tank 1 contains extremely high concentrations of tetrachloroethylene (6,440,000 to 38,300,000 µg/kg), trichloroethylene (458,000 to 965,000 µg/kg), and dichloroethylene (50,950 to 152,150 µg/kg). Those results indicate that the sludge is both a listed and characteristic hazardous waste. The bureau estimates that the cleanup will generate 130 cubic yards of waste.

The dry cleaning business formerly operated at the site between 1985 and 2001. The current owner, who bought the property after that original business closed, claims he acquired the land without knowing about the waste. He did not operate another dry cleaning business on the property.

The cleanup will be paid for with money from the state's Hazardous Waste Emergency Fund. NMED will continue to evaluate the site for further action under The Comprehensive Environmental Response,

Compensation, and Liability Act, also known as Superfund, or will also pursue corrective action under state Water Quality Control Commission Regulations.

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