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NMED Awards \$250,000 in Grants to Assist Counties, Local Governments and Solid Waste Authorities with Solid Waste Facility Projects

Money Will Pay for Closure of Old Landfills, Installation of Groundwater Monitoring Wells and New Solid Waste Equipment

(Santa Fe, NM) The New Mexico Environment Department will award \$250,000 in grants to thirteen communities and solid waste authorities to pay for the closure of landfills, improvements to waste transfer stations, groundwater monitoring wells and new equipment.

Solid Waste Facility Grant Funds for 2009 will be awarded to the villages of Angel Fire, Eagle Nest, Encino, and Willard; the cities of Lordsburg and Santa Rosa; the counties of Hidalgo Santa Fe and Valencia; and Estancia, Southwest and Tri City solid waste authorities.

“The money will help communities that are economically struggling to complete important solid waste projects, including those to help protect our state’s groundwater from impacts related to unlined landfills,” said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. “Improvements at waste collection centers and transfer stations will help curb illegal dumping by providing better trash pickup services and greater access to stations.”

The grants help tackle locally identified solid waste needs and priorities. Santa Rosa’s and Valencia County’s projects will help pay for engineering, design and earthwork costs that will help cap those communities’ old closed landfills. Capping old landfills helps protect groundwater from contamination. Southwest Solid Waste Authority in Silver City will use the grant money to install methane monitoring wells and improve the leachate collection system at the Silver City landfill. Hidalgo County, the City of Lordsburg, Tri-City Authority and the Village of Willard will use the money to upgrade groundwater monitoring programs at each community’s old closed unlined landfills. Santa Fe County, Estancia Valley Authority and the villages of Eagle Nest and Encino will use the funding for upgrades to transfer stations or collection centers or for improved customer service and safety measures. The Village of Angel Fire and Hidalgo County/City of Lordsburg will use grant funding to buy waste hauling equipment.

The grant program, authorized by the Solid Waste Management Act, provides funding for communities that have urgent needs to pay for projects that provide long-term benefits for communities and solid waste

authorities. The projects must further the protection of the health and welfare of the environment and residents in the state. Entities eligible for grants include municipalities, counties, and solid waste authorities. The department received 26 applications for grant funding, which totaled \$1.2 million in requests. The department will begin its next solid waste facility grant cycle in July. Those interested in pursuing upcoming grant funding should visit the bureau's Web site at <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/SWB/> in late June or early July for details, applications and instructions.

For more information about solid waste facility grants or the upcoming grant cycle, contact Auralie Ashley-Marx at (505) 827-2775 or auralie.ashley-marx@state.nm.us. For further information, call Marissa Stone at (505) 827-0314.

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