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## **Environment Department Begins Inspections at Tire Generator Locations to Ensure Proper Scrap Tire Disposal**

(Santa Fe, NM) The New Mexico Environment Department will begin this month inspecting tire generating facilities – including tire dealerships, automobile dealers and motor vehicle fleets – to ensure those facilities are complying with the state’s requirements for scrap tire tracking, disposal and recycling.

The inspections will help determine whether facilities are following a state rule that requires the proper tracking of scrap tires from generation points to final disposal sites.

“Tire dumps and stockpiles – in addition to sometimes being unsightly -- pose serious environmental risks in our state including the potential to cause fires,” said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. “The state’s rules on scrap tires provide a mechanism for businesses to ensure the tires are being disposed of properly.”

The rule requires that each load of 10 or more scrap tires transported by a scrap tire generator or hauler must be accompanied by a scrap tire manifest approved by the department. In addition, for-hire scrap tire haulers must be registered with the state. The manifest, mandated under the Recycling, Illegal Dumping and Scrap Tire Management Rule adopted in August 2007, tracks a scrap tire from its point of generation to its final destination. Points of generation include tire dealerships, automobile dealers and motor vehicle fleets. Authorized final destinations include permitted tire recycling facilities; permitted and registered landfills, transfer stations and collection centers; and permitted civil engineering project sites. Tire dealers and other generators that transport scrap tires are responsible for providing the manifest to the department during inspections.

The department’s random inspections are intended to make certain that manifests are properly used and contain required signatures of all parties involved in the disposal or recycling of the scrap tires.

The department deals with numerous cases involving scrap tires that have the potential to cause fires and attract rodents and insects that spread diseases including Hantavirus and West Nile Virus. Tires, because of their shape, hold rain water. Mosquitoes, including those that carry West Nile Virus and other diseases, can breed in that water.

The department issued three compliance orders totaling \$167,850 since 2001 to the former Cordova and Sons Tire Recycling Facility in Cuba for numerous tire recycling and solid waste violations, including the improper storage of roughly 1.4 million tires. That amount greatly exceeded number of tires in the facility's permit. The department also issued a compliance order to the owner and operator of the former Southwest Tire Processors Inc. in Socorro for improperly storing about a million scrap tires that several years ago caught fire and created a catastrophic fire. The department's Solid Waste Bureau worked with local and federal governments to help extinguish the fire and with efforts to clean up the site. Those efforts continue today. The department has also dealt with illegal tire stockpiling on numerous private properties along Highway 60 south of Belen. Several of those sites were cleaned up at taxpayer expense by the City of Socorro.

The department conducted a series of workshops around the state in the last six months to explain the scrap tire rule to tire dealers, haulers, and operators of landfills and recycling operations. Violations of the rule carry criminal penalties ( <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swb/pdf/RAID%20Act%20-%20Final.pdf> ).

A copy of the required manifest is available on the department's Web site at [www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swb](http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swb) .

For more information about the new scrap tire manifest system or other issues in the department's scrap tire program, contact Toni Duggan at (505) 827-0559 or [www.toni.duggan@state.nm.us](mailto:www.toni.duggan@state.nm.us).

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