



MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR

James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary
Jennifer J. Pruet, Deputy Secretary

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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The Environment Department's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.

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Environment Department starting public outreach on Ozone Attainment Initiative *Seven New Mexico counties reaching problematic ozone levels*

SANTA FE — As ozone levels reach concerning levels in seven New Mexico counties, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) is developing a plan to reduce elevated ozone levels to protect public health and the environment.

Air monitoring data in Doña Ana, Eddy, Lea, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, San Juan and Valencia counties indicate ozone levels are approaching the National Ambient Air Quality Standard set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). According to state statute, NMED must develop a plan to address ozone when levels approach the EPA standard to protect public health and avoid a federal designation of “nonattainment.”

As part of its Ozone Attainment Initiative, NMED’s Air Quality Bureau is holding a series of public informational meetings around the state:

5:30-7:30 p.m. Sept. 9

**Merrion Rooms A&B, San Juan College School of Energy
5301 College Blvd., Farmington, NM 87402**

1:30-3:30 p.m. Sept. 12

**Santa Fe Public Library Southside Branch
6599 Jaguar Dr., Santa Fe, NM 87507**

9:30-11:30 a.m. Sept. 25

**Roadrunner Room, Thomas Branigan Memorial Library
200 E Picacho Ave., Las Cruces, NM 88001**

5:30-7:30 p.m. Sept. 26

**Carlsbad Museum & Art Center
418 W Fox St., Carlsbad, NM 88220**

“NMED is hopeful that this initiative, alongside efforts to regulate excess methane emissions from the oil and gas industry, will result in improved air quality for all New Mexicans – especially vulnerable populations like children and seniors,” said Environment Department Cabinet Secretary James Kenney.

The Ozone Attainment Initiative aims to protect public health and the environment by ensuring air quality in all areas under NMED's jurisdiction is compliant with health-based standards. Remaining in attainment will also avoid federally-mandated regulatory requirements, timelines and oversight.

Ozone is created by chemical reactions between volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides in the presence of sunlight. High levels of ozone can cause respiratory illnesses in humans. More information on the health impacts of ozone is available [here](#).

NMED is in the beginning stages of this initiative and will conduct stakeholder outreach throughout the development of the plan. To receive updates on the plan, sign up for listserv announcements at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/NMED/subscriber/new>. More information about NMED's Ozone Attainment Initiative is at <https://www.env.nm.gov/air-quality/o3-initiative/>.

Please contact Robert Spillers of the Air Quality Bureau at robert.spillers@state.nm.us if you wish to attend a public meeting so that NMED can ensure sufficient space is available for participants.

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Kristine Yurdin, Non-Discrimination Coordinator

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If you believe that you have been discriminated against with respect to a NMED program or activity, you may contact the Non-Discrimination Coordinator identified above.

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