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James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary

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NEWS RELEASE*For Immediate Release***Sept. 26, 2019***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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New Mexico Environment Department issues citations and penalties to City of Santa Fe for safety violations resulting in April death of worker

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has cited the City of Santa Fe for seven safety violations following an investigation by the Department's Occupational Health and Safety Bureau (OHSB) into an April 1, 2019, accident that resulted in the death of a city employee. NMED has also proposed civil penalties of \$183,375 for the violations.

"Our Occupational Health and Safety Bureau's number one priority is ensuring the health and safety of workers in New Mexico," said NMED Cabinet Secretary James Kenney. "When that does not happen and worker injuries or fatalities occur, the State of New Mexico will hold employers accountable for such failures."

The accident occurred at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center when a maintenance worker replacing interior lighting fixtures as part of a planned upgrade contacted a 277-volt circuit as he was working from a scissor lift to remove existing equipment.

"Electrical safety violations result in far too many accidents and deaths in New Mexico and nationwide," said Robert Genoway, OHSB Chief. "All workers deserve a safe workplace."

NMED cited the City for violations including failure to properly train employees in electrical safe work practices, failure to institute safe procedures and failure to properly de-energize, lock out and verify de-energization of the circuits. The City is required to correct the violations or notify the OHSB if it intends to contest the citations within 15 business days.

Under the New Mexico Occupational Health and Safety Act, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OHSB's role is to ensure these conditions for working men and women in the state by setting and enforcing standards and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit https://www.env.nm.gov/occupational_health_safety/.

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