

**MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR**

James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary

Jennifer J. Pruet, Deputy Secretary

NEWS RELEASE*For Immediate Release***April 13, 2021**

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.

Contact: Maddy Hayden, Communications Director
New Mexico Environment Department
505.231.8800 | maddy.hayden@state.nm.us

Environment, public health on the way to better protection in New Mexico as Environment Department receives budget increase

After a decade of budget cuts, the New Mexico Environment Department's (NMED) base budget will increase by 21.3% for the upcoming state fiscal year starting July 1, 2021. The additional \$2.8 million will be a recurring increase to NMED's operating budget. NMED's overall operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year is approximately \$93.4 million.

"Starting in July, the New Mexico Environment Department will expand its efforts to safeguard communities and our environment," said NMED Cabinet Secretary James Kenney. "Budget is policy and this is a clear investment in the health of New Mexicans and their environment."

NMED's budget is a combination of state general fund, federal funding, and revenues collected for various permits and licenses. Starting July 1, 2021, the general fund portion of NMED's budget will increase from \$13.1 million to \$15.9 million – an increase of \$2.8 million. The remainder of NMED's budget is \$77.5 million (federal funding and revenues collected for permits/licenses).

The \$2.8 million increase in general fund is allocated across key NMED program areas as follows:

- \$1.4 million is allocated to the Occupational Health and Safety Bureau to expand its staffing and work for the first time since 1981. NMED's Occupational Health and Safety Bureau investigates workplace deaths, amputations, electrocutions, burns and other injuries. There are approximately 20 workplace fatalities and 2,400 workplace injuries that tragically impact New Mexico families annually. In 2019, New Mexico's worker fatality rate was 77% higher than the national average. Throughout the pandemic, NMED Occupational Health and Safety Bureau conducted more than 30,000 COVID-19 rapid responses which kept close to 9,000 businesses open, 300,000 employees protected and countless New Mexico families safe.
- \$894,400 is allocated to NMED's Drinking Water Bureau which provides support to and oversight of over 1,000 public drinking water systems serving nearly all 2 million New Mexicans.
- \$247,600 is allocated to assist with core operating expenses (e.g. human resources, information technology) and support public access and assistance to NMED's resources and data. In 2020, NMED handled 1,274 records requests (IPRA requests), assisted 234 constituents with formal inquiries and provided thousands of hours of technical assistance.

- \$200,000 is allocated to NMED's solid and hazardous waste bureaus to permit and inspect over 2,600 businesses that produce and manage infectious and toxic wastes in communities throughout New Mexico.
- \$100,000 is allocated to assist with key contractual services related to air quality improvements.

In addition to NMED's \$93.4 million budget, the Department also received approximately \$9.8 million for special projects in non-recurring state funds as follows:

- \$3.0 million to restore funding for air quality permitting and enforcement.
- \$2.5 million to undertake projects that protect and restore the environment across New Mexico.
- \$1.6 million to modernize and integrate our data systems to integrate information and improve transparency of public records.
- \$1.42 million to leverage federal funds for the clean-up of superfund hazardous waste sites.
- \$600,000 to assist public water systems with drinking water sampling and analysis.
- \$500,000 to support on-going coronavirus work.
- \$180,000 for the cleanup of the Pecos mine.

###

NMED does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age or sex in the administration of its programs or activities, as required by applicable laws and regulations. NMED is responsible for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries concerning non-discrimination requirements implemented by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972. If you have any questions about this notice or any of NMED's non-discrimination programs, policies or procedures, you may contact:

Kathryn Becker, Non-Discrimination Coordinator | NMED | 1190 St. Francis Dr., Suite N4050 | P.O. Box 5469 | Santa Fe, NM 87502
(505) 827-2855 or nd.coordinator@state.nm.us

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

###