



## **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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### **New Mexico Environment Department provides financing to Bernalillo County Fire & Rescue to go electric**

*DERA funding helps public safety reduce emissions, benefits climate*

**BERNALILLO COUNTY** — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) awarded Bernalillo County Fire & Rescue (BCFR) \$417,718 in grant funding to partially reimburse \$1,829,973 in project costs to replace a 1991 Engine Model Year diesel-fueled Class 8, Pierce Dash fire engine, with a Pierce Volterra battery electric fire engine that does not produce any tailpipe emissions.

“This new electric fire engine shows the versatility of zero emission vehicles”, said **Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham**. “Yet again, New Mexico is leading the way in practical, effective climate action.



Pierce Volterra Electric Fire Engine – Gilbert, Arizona Fire & Rescue

The retiring fire engine is a back up, in the event a primary fire engine becomes inactive due to repairs, or a station requires additional response capacity. The new electric fire engine will be operating out of BCFR's newest station house at 6810 Edith Blvd. NE, in Albuquerque's North Valley. This station is being developed as the County's first fully electric building and is scheduled to become operational in late 2024 or early 2025.

From a public health and environmental justice perspective, the benefits of replacing a single diesel fire truck are substantial. Portions of Bernalillo County, including its future home in the North Valley, currently suffer from high concentrations of diesel and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) pollution. The shift to electric equipment would eliminate 100% of the emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NOX) and PM<sub>2.5</sub> associated with the combustion of diesel fuel. NOX contributes to the formation of ground-level ozone, and both ozone and PM<sub>2.5</sub> contribute to the formation of smog. Exposure to diesel exhaust can lead to serious health conditions like asthma and respiratory illnesses and can worsen existing heart and lung disease, especially in children and the elderly.

Replacing engine No. 0941 with a new fully electric truck would be roughly equivalent to removing 37 gasoline-powered passenger vehicles from the road each year. Over the lifetime of the vehicle, it will offset 20,370 gallons of diesel fuel use with the added benefit of removing nearly 230 tons of carbon dioxide, aligning with Governor Lujan Grisham's climate change policy.

"We look forward to bringing one of the first all-electric fire engines into our department as well as our state. Our main goal is to purchase an engine that allows us to perform as efficiently and safely as we do today while also being mindful of our role in protecting our environment." said **Deputy County Manager and Fire Chief Greg Perez**

The mission of the Bernalillo County Fire Rescue is to preserve and protect lives and property from the adverse effects of fires or exposure to dangerous conditions. BCFR strives to provide a high level of quality care for medical emergencies and works to protect and empower the citizens of Bernalillo County through proactive education, prevention, and response. BCFR was first established on Sept. 15, 1958. In the time since it was established, the department has grown from a single volunteer station to what will soon become a fully paid, 14-district organization that staffs five to six paid personnel per station, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

"This new, zero-emission fire truck means better air quality for fire fighters and the community they serve, said **Environment Department Deputy Cabinet Secretary Sydney Lienemann**. "With more types of electric vehicles on the market, NMED is proud to see more and more organizations making the transition".

In 2005, the U.S. Congress passed DERA as an amendment to the Energy Policy Act. DERA was designed to reduce diesel emissions from existing diesel fleets that did not meet the federal emission standards at that time. The EPA is responsible for overseeing and distributing the DERA funds. EPA has awarded funding to NMED, and NMED in turn, serves as a pass-through agency providing sub-grant funding through its New Mexico Clean Diesel Program, for projects that reduce harmful heavy-duty diesel emissions. Since 2008, the Air Quality Bureau, which manages the program, has awarded over \$2.3 million in grant funding for qualifying diesel emissions reduction projects, including this project.

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