



## **NEWS RELEASE**

*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.*

### **For Immediate Release**

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## **NMED secures funding for mobile air monitoring lab from legal settlement**

**SANTA FE** — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) is enhancing its ability to monitor air quality with a new mobile air monitoring lab, funded by a \$500,000 legal settlement between conservation group WildEarth Guardians, and OXY USA Inc., one of the largest oil and gas producers in the country.

The funding will allow NMED to purchase the lab, equip it with supplies, and cover start-up costs, including personnel and operational needs. The mobile lab will be able to test air quality and weather conditions in real time in the Permian Basin, a region that produces nearly 40% of the nation's oil and has rising ozone levels.

“This new mobile lab will help us respond quickly to community concerns about local air quality in the Permian Basin,” said **Michelle Miano**, director of NMED's Environmental Protection Division. “We're grateful for this funding, which allows us to expand our efforts to protect clean air and public health for all New Mexicans.”

NMED's stationary monitors show ozone levels in Lea and Eddy Counties exceeding 95% of federal air quality standards. Prolonged ozone exposure can damage airways, increase asthma attacks, and make lungs more vulnerable to infections.

The funding comes from a 2022 legal settlement between WildEarth Guardians and Oxy under the federal Clean Air Act. The lawsuit addressed emission violations at Oxy's Turkey Track facility near Carlsbad.

“We are encouraged that these funds will increase the New Mexico Environment Department's ability to monitor air quality in southeast New Mexico, where communities feel the impacts

every day of air pollution caused by oil and gas extraction,” said **Kelly Fuller**, Climate and Energy Program Director at WildEarth Guardians. “We’re glad to have had this opportunity to enhance the department’s air quality monitoring capacity and hope to aid the department again in the future to improve New Mexico’s air and water.”

NMED’s recent enforcement actions include:

- **\$47.8 million** penalty against Targa Northern Delaware, LLC, for excessive emissions at its Red Hills Gas Processing Plant near Jal in Lea County(December 2024).
- **\$24.5 million** settlement with Ameredev II LLC for state air regulation violations (April 2024).
- **\$4 million** in penalties for and a commitment for **\$5.5 million** to comply with state and federal clean air regulations and to offset past illegal emissions with Apache Corporation (February 2024).
- **\$5.5 million** penalty and **\$4.6 million** in compliance costs from Mewbourne Oil Company (August 2023).
- **\$1.15 million** penalty and **\$5.05 million** in compliance projects from Matador Production Company (March 2023).

These enforcement actions demonstrate NMED’s commitment to holding polluters accountable and protecting New Mexico’s air quality.

For more information on NMED’s air quality initiatives visit: <https://www.env.nm.gov/air-quality/>

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