NEWS 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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NMED awards $11.5 million to 15 circular economy projects
Projects will bolster statewide efforts to build sustainable supply chains

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has selected 15 projects to receive a combined $11.5 million to advance the circular economy in New Mexico.

A circular economy keeps products and materials typically seen as waste in use for as long as possible through practices such as maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacturing, recycling and composting. These efforts reduce pollution and resource extraction, strengthen local supply chains and improve affordability while creating jobs.

The selected projects include initiatives focused on recycling wind turbine blades and solar panels, reducing food waste, rehabilitating soil with organic waste and developing a circular economy workforce. Together, the projects aim to keep valuable materials in use longer and recover resources that would otherwise be discarded — additionally creating more than 300 jobs across New Mexico.

"By working with our legislators over the past three years we've been able to jumpstart New Mexico's growing circular economy," said **Environment Secretary James Kenney**. "These substantial investments and public-private partnerships create transformational environmental and economic benefits across our state — ushering in a future of stewardship and setting a model for sustainable business practices."

The selected projects will keep materials in New Mexico's supply chain instead of disposing of them after their initial use, supporting key tenets of New Mexico's Climate Action Plan by reducing the state's carbon footprint and Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's 50-Year Water Action Plan by supporting source water protection and conservation.

NMED selected the projects from two funding categories:

- **Implementation awards:** Eleven projects were selected to receive a combined $9 million to establish or expand circular economy operations, including recycling infrastructure, material recovery facilities, reuse programs and workforce development.

- **Feasibility and assessment awards:** Four projects were selected to receive a combined $2.5 million to evaluate potential circular economy initiatives through activities such as market analyses, supply chain assessments and project planning.

The funding comes from a $25 million appropriation approved by the New Mexico Legislature during the 2026 legislative session to advance circular economy and industrial decarbonization initiatives. Of that amount, NMED directed $11.5 million toward contracts furthering circular economy projects and $2 million toward administering NMED's circular economy program. The remaining $11.5 million will be administered by the New Mexico Economic Development Department.

The 15 organizations selected for state contracts are:

- **Chama Peak Land Alliance – $839,637**
    - Thinning overgrown forests in the San Juan-Chama watershed and turning the woody material into biochar, a charcoal-like substance used to enhance soil. The project reduces wildfire risk and builds a regional biochar market to support rural communities — particularly those with historic timber industries in Northern New Mexico. Chama Peak Land Alliance estimates 100 jobs will be created through these efforts.
- **City of Albuquerque – $874,626**
    - Installing interactive waste-sorting stations and composting systems at public facilities reaching at least 1.1 million people per year, with a goal of diverting 30 tons of waste annually. Finished compost will be applied to seven community growing spaces in the city.
- **Estancia Valley Solid Waste Authority – $1,000,000**
    - Determining how New Mexico can develop a wind blade recycling pathway that currently has no in-state option, with the goal of establishing a wind turbine blade recycling facility at its Moriarty landfill employing 60 New Mexicans. The study will assess technology, site suitability, economic and workforce factors, as well as conduct community engagement.
- **Pueblo of Santa Ana – $775,256**
    - Establishing a composting program that converts agricultural and green waste from the Pueblos of Santa Ana and Sandia into compost to enrich soil for agricultural production on Tribal lands. The project will provide healthier food options to the communities and help stabilize the waters that flow through them.
- **Santa Fe County – $614,345**
    - Launching a mobile woody biomass processing and biochar production program in partnership with the Santa Fe County Fire Department to reduce waste and wildfire risk.
- **Eastern Research Group Inc. – $846,789**
    - Developing a public reporting dashboard, performance measures and resource recovery strategies for the Recycling and Illegal Dumping Alliance to implement New Mexico's Circular Economy Plan in partnership with the Sustainable Action Foundation. The dashboard will enhance public awareness of ongoing circular economy projects throughout New Mexico and the improved environmental outcomes associated with them.

- **Flexible Film Recycling Alliance – $596,449**
    - Piloting a collection program for plastic packing materials such as pallet wrap from Albuquerque and Santa Fe businesses to evaluate opportunities for statewide expansion. The project aims to reuse the materials in order to offset creation of new plastic waste and pollution associated with plastic disposal.
- **Goodwill Industries of New Mexico – $996,948**
    - Expanding statewide textile collection with 32 new donation bins and upgrading its Albuquerque processing facility to better characterize textiles for resale, refurbishment or salvage and fund Goodwill's workforce programs.
- **Kind Sun Ltd. – $999,643**
    - Establishing an Albuquerque facility to collect, test and redeploy used solar panels from around the state while developing a local workforce for solar panel reuse in partnership with organizations like Central New Mexico Community College.
- **Regional Regeneration – $484,975**
    - Assessing opportunities to turn dead and fire-damaged forest material into biochar across four northern New Mexico counties to support forest restoration and watershed protection.
- **REMADE Institute – $1,000,000**
    - Providing workforce training and technical assistance in partnership with San Juan College to help New Mexico businesses expand remanufacturing, refurbishment and electronic waste recovery. New Mexicans trained by REMADE Institute may find employment in target industries like aerospace, green energy and advanced manufacturing.
- **Roadrunner Food Bank of New Mexico – $205,932**
    - Evaluating opportunities to convert non-distributable food waste into useful agricultural products through composting and anaerobic digestion.
- **Soilutions – $841,868**
    - Upgrading equipment at its Albuquerque composting facility to increase processing capacity by approximately 30%, from 19,000 tons to more than 25,000 tons of organic material annually.
- **TerraCycle US Inc. – $423,533**
    - Establishing a statewide collection and recycling program for disposable nicotine vapes and e-cigarettes to keep lithium-ion batteries — a common fire hazard — out of landfills and conventional recycling facilities. The process will bolster the extraction of lithium for reuse, reducing the need for costly imports.
- **Resources Recycling Systems Inc. – $1,000,000**
    - Launching NextCycle New Mexico, a three-year statewide business accelerator that will assess gaps in municipal recycling and recovery systems and support businesses developing circular economy solutions.

On Aug. 14, 2026, NMED issued the request for proposals for circular economy projects while also releasing the state's first Circular Economy Plan, a roadmap for reducing waste, strengthening in-state markets and keeping materials circulating in New Mexico. On Sept. 11, NMED received 29 project proposals, illustrating the demand by the private and public sectors to increase circular economy efforts in New Mexico.

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