



THE GREEN GAZETTE

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

SPRING 2004

MISSION STATEMENT: TO PROVIDE THE HIGHEST QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGHOUT THE STATE BY PROMOTING A SAFE, CLEAN, AND PRODUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT.

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NEW MEXICO ANNOUNCES PLANS TO SEEK WATER IMPORTANT WATER QUALITY POWERS

On April 2, 2004, New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Secretary, Ron Curry announced plans to seek state delegation for the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Delegation will allow New Mexico to take charge of the quality of its surface water resources rather than deferring to the federal government.

Since its introduction in 1972, the NPDES program has been responsible for significant improvements to our Nation's water quality. The NPDES permit program is authorized by the federal Clean Water Act to control water pollution through regulation of point sources that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States.

Currently, the EPA's Region 6 office in Dallas administers New Mexico's program, which encompasses nearly 1000 permits statewide. New Mexico is one of only a handful of states that has not gained authority to administer its own program.

NPDES delegation will also provide benefits to New Mexico permit holders, including accessibility to an in-state oversight agency and the ability to tailor the permitting process to meet state-specific needs and issues. For more information about this initiative, please contact Marcy Leavitt, Chief of the Surface Water Quality Bureau at (505) 827-2795.



Secretary Ron Curry with EPA Regional Administrator Richard Greene in Dallas

The winners for this Quarter's Employee Recognition awards are:

*Margaret Ryan, Construction Programs, Division
Mike Fowler, Air Quality Bureau*

*Carlos Romero, Field Operations
Baird Swanson, Ground Water Bureau*



In the end, our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy"
-Nature Conservancy's John Sawhill

Which of the following substances is not biodegradable?

Paper
Styrofoam

Food refuse
Sawdust

(Answer on page 6)

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

Spring is an exciting time in our natural environment. Flowers pop up, apricot and apple trees come back to life, and, if we're lucky, the rivers and acequias are swollen with snowmelt. This spring has also been an exciting time at the Environment Department.

On April 2, I traveled to Dallas with Surface Water Quality Bureau Chief Marcy Leavitt, Administrative Services Division Director Rick Martinez and several other members of NMED's staff to meet with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on a very important subject in New Mexico, surface water.

Based upon our positive discussions with EPA Regional Administrator Richard Greene and others, the Department is now in the process of beginning an effort to acquire primacy for NPDES permitting and enforcement. We are one of only a handful of states—and the only one in our region—that doesn't currently have this power.

I am very excited about this effort. By giving the state more control of its surface water destiny, we will be able to offer better service to New Mexico industry and better protection to New Mexico's citizens. To learn more about this endeavor, please read the Surface Water Bureau's article in this issue.



Sincerely,

 Ron Curry
 CABINET SECRETARY

New Arsenic Standard for Drinking Water

Arsenic is a naturally occurring element in much of the water in New Mexico and most of the Rocky Mountain, Western, and Upper Mid-continent states. Generally, higher concentrations of arsenic are found in ground water than in surface water.

Currently, EPA has finalized a new standard for arsenic in drinking water that reduces the maximum contaminant level (MCL) from 50 parts per billion (ppb) to 10 ppb. The effective date of the rule is January 23, 2006.

In New Mexico, there are an estimated 237 water sources with arsenic levels greater than the 10 ppb standard which impacts about 86 public water systems. The New Mexico Environment Department Drinking Water Bureau (NMED-DWB) will contact those water systems affected by this new standard of 10 ppb.

According to recent estimates, the costs of treatment for small systems will be between \$58.00 and \$327.00 per household per year, while removal for large systems is estimated between \$28.00 and \$50.00 per household per year.

EPA plans to spend \$20 million dollars for research and development of treatment technologies that will help systems meet the new standard (over the next two years). In addition, the New Mexico Finance Authority and a number of other state financial institutions have funding to assist small systems with upgrading treatment units toward compliance with the new standards.

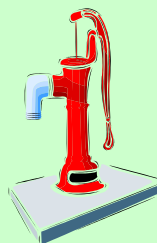
The NMED, as the primacy agency for drinking water regulations, is authorized to grant variances and exemptions for the new standard on a case-by-case basis. Due to the cost of implementing the new rule and the difficulty of obtaining funding, water systems are encouraged to request variances and exemptions to the new arsenic standard of 10 ppb.

The NMED presented and took stakeholder input on its Arsenic Implementation Strategy for drinking water on April 30, 2004, in Albuquerque. The meeting was from 8:30am –4:00pm in the Auditorium of the Science & Technology Park at the University of New Mexico. Check back soon for updates on the results!

WATER FAIRS

Across the state New Mexicans are having their water tested for free. The Ground Water Quality Bureau (GWQB), working with the Surface Water Quality Bureau and local field offices, will use portable analytical equipment to test for nitrate, iron, sulfate, fluoride, conductivity, pH, and total dissolved solids. The GWQB will be in the following locations on the following dates:

- Pojoaque — June 5**
- Tesuque — June 19**
- Nambe — July 10**



Helpful Hints to Indoor Water Use



**TOTAL DOLLARS WASTED
BY NOT BEING WATER
SMART
-\$160.43 PER YEAR**

The Source	Water Waster	Cost Per Year
Leaking Toilet	90 Gallons Per Day/ 2738 Gallons Per Month/32,850 Gal- lons Per Year	\$86.40
10 Minute Shower w/Inefficient Shower Head 2 people in Household	30 Gallons Per Shower/ 420 Gallons Per Week 21,840 Gallons Per Year	\$57.44
Dripping Faucet 2 drips per second	A slow steady drip (.72 Gallons Per Hour) 17 Gallons Per Day 526 Gallons Per Month 6307 Gal- lons Per Year	\$16.59

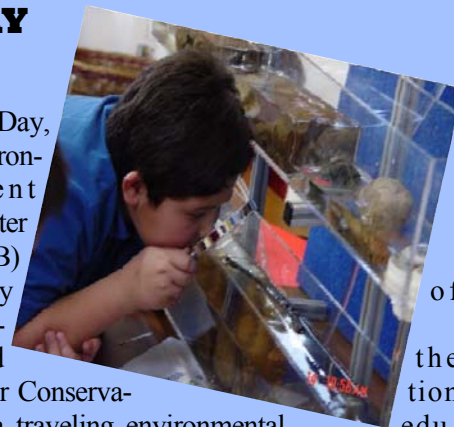
**NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau
Provides LANL Tour to EPA**

Steve Gilrein, EPA's Associate Division Director, and several EPA staff members visited with NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau staff on April 15th to discuss and tour Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). EPA is interested in ensuring that LANL is meeting its environmental indicator for current human exposures controlled. This indicator is a Government Performance Results Act, or GPRA, measure for hazardous waste facilities in the U.S. that have a "high" ranking. This GPRA measure is determined through an evaluation process that looks at exposure to humans through various pathways, including groundwater. Institutional controls are also evaluated as a means to limit the potential for humans to be exposed to hazardous substances.

New Mexico has thirteen facilities with a high ranking. This indicator has already been met at all other permitted hazardous waste facilities in New Mexico. NMED is hopeful that through the implementation of its corrective action order for LANL, the lab will meet this measure.

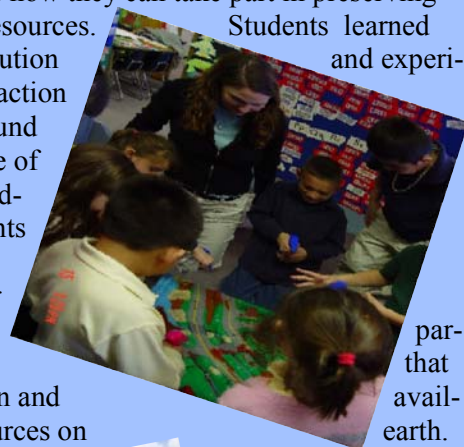
EARTH DAY

In the spirit of Earth Day, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB) teamed up with the City of Santa Fe Water Conservation Office and Santa Fe County Water Conservation Program to facilitate a traveling environmental education festival.



from April 19th through the 23rd, employees of those agencies traveled to many Santa Fe Public Elementary Schools to present lessons and activities to fourth grade students. Activities illustrated the importance of New Mexico's clean water taught students how they can take part in preserving our precious water resources.

Students learned about sources of pollution and experimented with its interaction with surface and ground water through the use of watershed and groundwater models. Students also brainstormed ways to reduce water consumption, and participated in activities that reveal the distribution and ability of water resources on



Field Operations staff also got in the Earth Day spirit presenting water information to Tucumcari Elementary school students

IT'S A STATE OF MIND
 State Agency Recycling Team
 Reduction **STARTs** with You
 Reuse **STARTs** with You
 Recycling **STARTs** with You
 Questions about your recycling program? Call (505) 827-0197

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS BUREAU

After many years of working with an out-dated and inadequate facility aids city of Lovington, the operators of the Lovington wastewater plant may be in for a change. That's because the City recently entered into a \$4 million loan agreement with the NMED Construction Programs Bureau for improvements to the city's wastewater system. These funds are made available through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan program. A check signing ceremony was held on March 16, 2004 with NMED Cabinet Secretary Ron Curry and Lovington Mayor Troy Harris to formally execute the agreement.

The improvements to the system include construction of aeration basins, contact channels, chlorination building, blower building, and refurbishing the wastewater lift stations. According to Stephanie DuBois, CPB Project Manager, "this wastewater system will help sustain and provide effective improvements to treatment for the volume of wastewater generated by the City of Lovington."

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program is one of many funding programs administered through the Construction Programs Bureau. The CWSRF program, which utilizes Federal EPA funds, provides local government authorities in New Mexico with low cost financial assistance for improvements to wastewater, solid waste, or storm drainage facilities that protect groundwater. The Bureau is currently administering thirteen other CWSRF funded projects.



Present at the check signing ceremony were (from L to R) Ron Curry, NMED Cabinet Secretary; Alice Arias, CPB Program Administrator; Jon Goldstien, NMED Communications Director; Ramona Rael, CPB Financial Manager; Valerie Trujillo, Program Assistant; Rick Martinez NMED ASD Director and Mayor Troy Harris, City of Lovington.

SOLID WASTE

NMED recently awarded six tire recycling grants, totaling \$475,947, to communities throughout the state to abate scrap tires dumps and/or support tire recycling facility programs. Recipients of the grants are Estancia Valley Solid Waste Authority, County of Luna, Otero County, Sangre de Cristo Solid Waste Authority, Southwest Solid Waste Authority, and the Village of Tularosa. The tire recycling grant program, funded through a vehicle registration fee, was created by the Legislature to address problems created by the disposal of tires at legal and illegal sites. The highest priority of grants is to clean up scrap tire dumps. They are a potential fire hazard and harborage for disease-bearing vectors, including mosquitoes carrying the West Nile Virus. Toni Duggan of the Solid Waste Bureau manages the tire grant program.



Tripper, Bear, and the Air

The Ozone Activity Book for San Juan County

The Air Quality Bureau has been awarded an Education Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to develop an activity book for elementary school children on the issue of ozone pollution in San Juan County. The purpose of the activity book is to educate students on:

- What is ozone pollution;
- How ozone pollution is formed;
- Ozone in San Juan County; and
- Ways to reduce ozone pollution at home.

The book takes children along on the adventures of Tripper the cat and Bear the hamster as they learn about ozone pollution in San Juan County. The book contains information on ozone pollution, as well as games and other exercises to reinforce the lessons learned throughout the activity book. Along with the book, children will be given a poster to hang up at their home that shows what they and their families can do to help reduce the formation of ozone.

For more information on ozone in San Juan County or to get a copy of *Tripper, Bear, and the Air* please visit NMED's San Juan County Ozone page at <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/aqb/projects/Ozone.html>.



Brain Teaser:

WHAT GETS WETTER AND WETTER THE MORE IT DRIES answer on page 6



Espanola Basin Workshop Geomorphic Poster Presentation

DOE Oversight staff presented a poster at the 3rd annual Española basin workshop in Santa Fe on March 2nd and 3rd. The poster addressed channel destabilization and its related adjustments in Pueblo Canyon since the Cerro Grande fire. Staff generated two reports that describe the channel characterization work and storm water monitoring completed in Pueblo Canyon in 2001 and 2002. These reports summarize the conditions of the channels contaminated with legacy wastes and estimate the mass of plutonium and sediments transported. These reports were based on field measurements of channel dimensions, profiles, and plan views in lower Pueblo Canyon. These measurements were used to characterize the channels, predict their responses to changing flow regimes, and monitor changes in the

canyon.

The frequency and magnitude of storm water runoff events has increased due to the 2000 fire impacts to the upper watersheds above the Pajarito Plateau. These runoff events are destabilizing the channels and banks in Pueblo Canyon containing LANL legacy wastes and transporting contaminated sediments onto neighboring San Idelfonso property and ultimately into the Rio Grande. DOE Oversight staff have been working with LANL, the Pajarito Plateau Watershed Partnership, and other entities to begin stream channel stabilization efforts, continue forest remediation, reduce urban runoff, and improve storm water monitoring.

The workshop was sponsored by the US Geologic Society and attended by scientists as well as members of the public concerned about water supplies in north central New Mexico.

Thank you to the following writers for their submittals

John Kieling Hazardous Waste Bureau
Rita Trujillo Air Quality Bureau
Julie Desai Drinking Water Bureau
Margaret Ryan Construction Programs Bureau
Brian Royer Occupational Health and safety Bureau
Erin Murphy Ground Water Bureau
Rick Shean Employee Recognition Committee
Erik Galloway Department of Energy Oversight
Michele Mykris Surface Water Bureau
Michelle Vattano– Pollution Prevention
Gifford Stack– Solid Waste Bureau



Just a hat's off to SWB's patriot of the day, Charles Ferguson. He was solely responsible for getting the new flag pole and flags in front of his Clovis office.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION COMMITTEE FORMED

The New Mexico Environment Department Employee Recognition Program has been restored, starting with the meeting of the Employee Recognition Committee (ERC). ERC members were selected from volunteers from each division. Seven members are currently serving one-year terms. Members include: Judy Bentley, (Personnel Services Bureau - ex officio member), Cathy Atencio (Petroleum Storage Tank Bureau), Ronald Duffy (Air Quality Bureau), Alex Mendiola (Personnel Services Bureau), John Parker (Radiation Protection Bureau) Rick Shean (ERC Chair - Ground Water Quality Bureau), Linda Sosa (Personnel Services Bureau), Glen Smutz (Information Technology Services Bureau), Pauline Vigil (Surface Water Quality Bureau), and Cecilia Williams (District II). The new ERC was conceived by the Accountability Theme Team, which recommended that a "sustainable and meaningful employee recognition program" be implemented at the beginning of 2004.

The ERC's first challenge has been revising the existing Employee Recognition Policy. Awards offered by the NMED have been updated and added, and the nomination process and criteria have been improved. Awards include Employee of the Quarter and Year, annual group recognition awards and special awards recognizing outstanding efforts for both administrative and technical staff. The ERC will also organize department-wide events and other special activities for NMED.

The Employee Recognition Committee Policy is expected to be finalized by the first week of May, and solicitations for Quarterly Employee Recognition Awards nominees will be announced during the last week of April.



The historic signing of House Bill 19 which will allow NMED to apply monies from the State Corrective Action Fund to other water quality needs L to R Secretary Curry, Governor Bill Richardson, Lt. Governor Diane Denish, Representative Patricia Lundstrom, and State Water Engineer John D’Antonio

Occupational Health & Safety Bureau

After a concerted effort that culminated with the March 2nd public hearing before the Environmental Improvement Board, the OHSB completed the final stage of promulgating the Convenience Store employee safety & security regulation. The approval by the EIB validated not only the Senate Joint Memorial 4 recognition of the deplorable increase of high profile acts of violence against convenience store employees, but also the resulting OHSB’s data analysis and recommendations. Consequently, promulgation of the new regulation will provide improved safety and security for employees and customers through a uniform regulatory program for the state’s 887 operating convenience stores.

The OHSB’s appearance before the EIB also marked a milestone in the Bureau’s history as the first time in 9 years to petition for an addition to the current regulatory standards. A remarkable effort for the OHSB staff after a long 6 month negotiated consensus with industry representatives to further ensure employee health and safety throughout New Mexico.

Currently, the regulation is available on the OHSB’s website as well as the Department’s. The estimated date for publication is around April 30. The regulations will be effective June 30, 2004 and the convenience stores have 90 days to implement the regulation requirements.

Solid Waste Bureau Helps Santa Fe Collect Record Amount of Household Hazardous Waste

The sixth annual Santa Fe Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection day on April 25 shattered all the records – number of cars, volume of material, and number of volunteers from NMED’s Solid Waste Bureau.

Some 930 vehicles visited the Santa Fe transfer station, with almost two-thirds of those donating e-waste, or electronic waste comprised mainly of old computer monitors, processing units, and peripherals. The five-member SWB team handled all e-waste collection. NMED personnel lifted the components from vehicles, carried it to appropriate pallets, stacked it two or three levels high, and wrapped the material for shipment in 40-foot trailers. During the seven-hour collection period, over 22 tons of e-waste was donated, nearly three times the volume received last year.

Members of the SWB team were: Greg Baker, Toni Duggan, Charles Ferguson, Ernie Gutierrez, and E. Gifford Stack.

“If we didn’t have SWB’s help, things would not have gone as smoothly as they did,” said Bill DeGrande, the HHW event organizer.



Next year’s HHW collection day for Santa Fe is April 24, 2005.

(Answer from page 1)
Styrofoam

(Answer from page 4)
A Towel

People don’t usually regard junk mail as an environmental hazard, just a nuisance. It actually creates an incredible waste. If a person were to save up all the unwanted paper received in the mail for a year, he would have the equivalent of one and one half trees. Therefore, if only a million people were to stop their junk mail, 1.5 million trees would be saved. The fuel and human energy necessary to deliver such a volume of mail would likewise be saved.

“Don’t blow it- good planets are hard to find”– Quoted in Time Magazine

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