



ENFORCEMENT WATCH ALERT

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.

NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

September 10, 2026

Contact: Jorge Estrada, Public Relations Coordinator
New Mexico Environment Department
505.690.5326 | jorge.estrada@env.nm.gov

Enforcement Watch Alert: 270 enforcement actions initiated; 54 resolved in August 2026

NMED Task Force Responds to Cedar Hill Dumping

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Environment Department is highlighting the ongoing success of its [Enforcement Watch](#) initiative, a transparency-focused program providing the public with consistent and timely information about the Department's enforcement actions across environmental protection, public health, and worker safety programs.

By making enforcement data accessible, Enforcement Watch reinforces NMED's commitment to New Mexico residents for accountability and regulatory compliance statewide.

Launched in June 2023, Enforcement Watch shares monthly updates on enforcement actions and their resolutions. These updates are broadly divided into two categories:

- **Active Matters:** Alleged violations of state regulations, rules, permits, or licenses that are currently under investigation or pending resolution.
- **Resolved Matters:** Cases that have been adjudicated in court or administratively resolved, including the full payment of any civil penalties.

Spotlight: Environmental Crimes Task Force Advances Cedar Hill Case

Earlier this year, the New Mexico Environment Department's Environmental Crimes Task Force mobilized to address illegal dumping identified near Cedar Hill, north of Aztec. What began as a routine assessment quickly developed into a coordinated response involving environmental regulators, a private remediation contractor and law enforcement.

NMED received notice of suspected illegal dumping at the site earlier in the year. Law enforcement later confirmed that new waste materials continued to appear, indicating ongoing unlawful activity. That discovery heightened concerns at the site and prompted closer coordination among Environmental Crimes Task Force partners.

The remote location near County Road 2300 and U.S. Highway 550 presented logistical challenges. NMED's Emergency Operations and Response Bureau developed a field assessment plan to evaluate conditions at the site and determine appropriate next steps.

After reviewing a 2026 Corrective Action Plan (CAP) submitted by Envirotech Inc., NMED authorized waste characterization and cleanup activities. The plan established the framework for characterizing the waste and determining the appropriate cleanup approach.

NMED's Incident Response team directed Envirotech to begin waste characterization sampling. Law enforcement partners provided updates and information regarding new waste deposits, and helped to ensure potential evidence was documented and preserved. Envirotech coordinated sampling activities and field scheduling with NMED personnel.

"Cases like Cedar Hill show why our Environmental Crimes Task Force is so important," said **Russell L. Lashley, EORB bureau chief**. "Illegal dumping can threaten communities, natural resources and public health, and addressing it requires close coordination between our environmental experts and law enforcement partners. That is exactly what this Task Force was built to do."

Envirotech completed initial waste characterization sampling under the approved plan. The Environmental Crimes Task Force will review laboratory data, finalize the remediation schedule, monitor the site for additional illegal dumping and conduct follow-up visits to verify cleanup progress. The Task Force will also evaluate potential enforcement actions based on evidence collected during the investigation.

Enforcement Watch updates for August 2026

In August 2026, the Compliance and Enforcement Division added 270 new cases to Active Matters and resolved 54, demonstrating ongoing enforcement and accountability across the state.

The following enforcement cases were initiated in August:

- 177 notices of violation issued by the Water Protection Compliance and Enforcement Bureau
- 69 notices of violation issued by the Food Safety Program to retail food establishments
- 10 notices of violation issued by the the Occupational Health and Safety Bureau
- 9 notices of violation issued by the Resource Protection Compliance and Enforcement Bureau
- 5 notices of violation issued by the Environmental Protection Compliance and Enforcement Bureau

The following enforcement cases were resolved in August:

- 41 cases in the Water Protection Compliance and Enforcement Bureau
- 6 cases in the Resource Protection Compliance and Enforcement Bureau
- 6 cases in the Occupational Health and Safety Bureau

- 1 case in the Environmental Protection Compliance and Enforcement Bureau

Highlights of alleged violations and resolved enforcement actions in August include:

- The Environmental Protection Compliance and Enforcement Bureau issued a [Notice of Violation](#) to Harvest Four Corners, for a violation at the Richardson Straddle Compressor Station, located northwest of Aztec, New Mexico. The notice cites the failure to conduct an emissions test in the previous 36 months in violation of New Mexico air quality regulations and the federal Clean Air Act.
- The Occupational Health and Safety Bureau [issued a Citation](#) to McKinley Papers of Prewitt, New Mexico for did not ensure employees were protected from multiple points of operation, thereby exposing employees to injuries in violation of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.
- The Environmental Health Bureau issued a [Notice of Violation](#) to Comfort Inn & Suites of Deming, New Mexico, for operating an aquatic venue without a valid operating permit, in violation of New Mexico Public Aquatic Venues Regulations.
- The Resource Protection Compliance & Enforcement Bureau issue a [Notice of Violation](#) to the Sandpoint Landfill, of Carlsbad, New Mexico, for failure to control litter, failure to apply adequate daily cover, failure to secure a monitoring well and failure to maintain a complete scrap tire manifest, in violation of New Mexico solid waste rules and recycling, illegal dumping and scrap tire management rules.
- The Water Protection Compliance and Enforcement Bureau issued a [Notice of Violation](#) to the Pine River MDCA, of Ignacio, Colorado, for failing to submit the 2025 calendar year Consumer Confidence Report to its consumers, in violation of New Mexico regulations.

Enforcement Watch provides the public, the business community, environmental nongovernment organizations, and municipal governments with easy access to see which organizations NMED has alleged are in violation of regulations, permits, and/or licenses administered by the Department. It is updated when violations are alleged or resolved. Retrospective enforcement matters are added as staffing resources allow. Organizations remain on Enforcement Watch until the alleged violations are corrected to the satisfaction of the Department.

The easiest way for an organization to avoid appearing on the Enforcement Watch is to stay off it in the first place by remaining in full compliance with applicable regulations. NMED encourages organizations that are unclear of their regulatory responsibilities to contact a consultant and conduct a third-party compliance audit and disclose potential violations.

NMED provides detailed compliance and enforcement metrics in the Compliance Measures section of the [Quarterly Performance Report](#).

The full Enforcement Watch can be viewed at <https://www.env.nm.gov/enforcement-watch>.

###

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: Kate Cardenas, Non-Discrimination Coordinator | NMED | 1190 St. Francis Dr., Suite N4050 | P.O. Box 5469 | Santa Fe, NM 87502 or (505) 827-2855 or nd.coordinator@env.nm.gov. If you believe that you have been discriminated against with respect to a NMED program or activity, you may contact the Non-Discrimination Coordinator.

###