

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Environmental Justice Achievement Award

State or Local Government



New Mexico Environment Department



Cabinet Secretary Ron Curry and previous Deputy Cabinet Secretary Derrick Weichman-Moore.

EPA is pleased to present a 2008 Environmental Justice Achievement Award to the **New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) for its work to develop policies, amend regulations, and affect decisionmaking with environmental justice goals in mind.**

NMED began its environmental justice program with a unique process of strategy and implementation to seek public input about the nature and extent of environmental justice in New Mexico. The process was notable for its focus on grassroots community participation in the planning phase, the involvement of these communities in a series of listening sessions, and subsequent community meetings held throughout New Mexico. NMED convened an Environmental Justice Planning Committee comprised of representatives of local government, Indian Tribes, industry, and grassroots and community organizations. As a result of NMED's environmental justice outreach, collaboration, and planning, the State implemented permitting reforms, new training programs, and improved public notification, comment, and participation. Major milestones of NMED's efforts included the creation of the Environmental Justice Policy Committee, the Environmental Justice Task Force, and the New Mexico Environmental Justice Executive Order signed by the Governor on November 18, 2005.

The Executive Order directs state interagency coordination to address environmental justice issues, and also directs state agencies to provide meaningful public participation in decisionmaking processes and to translate information in Spanish and indigenous Tribal languages and dialects. NMED also gathers available data to address the impacts of NMED decisions in low-income and minority communities. For example, NMED's solid waste management regulations include environmental justice provisions. One such provision requires industry to conduct community impact assessments of proposed actions to determine if low-income or minority groups might be adversely affected.

