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CONTACT: Mark Shaffer, Director of Communications, (602) 771-2215 (o);
(480) 433-9551 (cell)

ADEQ Announces Upcoming “Notice of Ranking Period” For Underground Storage Tank State Assurance Fund Payments

PHOENIX – (Feb. 12, 2010) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials announced today that a ranking period will begin March 31 in which claims for leaking underground storage tank investigations and cleanups will be evaluated and ranked for payment.

Because of transfers from the State Assurance Fund (SAF) due to the state’s \$1.3 billion budget shortfall, the SAF balance may not be sufficient to pay all anticipated requests for payment from the fund after March 31, 2010. The State Assurance Fund (SAF) assists eligible underground storage tank owners, operators and others in meeting the potentially high costs of leaking underground storage tank investigations and cleanups.

Claims will be ranked based upon risk to human health and the environment, the financial need of the applicant who is requesting payment, and whether delays in payment would adversely affect cleanups already under way at leaking underground storage tank sites. The ranking period will continue until ADEQ is able to pay all eligible payment requests in process.

“The statewide budget crisis is driving difficult but necessary decisions and ranking of State Assurance Fund claims is a perfect example. The ranking of claims is the fairest, most responsible way to continue protecting public health and the environment when dollars are scarce,” said ADEQ Director Benjamin H. Grumbles.

Direct notice will be provided to each applicant with a request for payment under review by the department. Those applicants who are requesting consideration of their financial need also will be notified of the requirement to submit supporting documentation.

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