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Naco Sanitary District Joins ADEQ's Small Communities Environmental Compliance Assistance Program

PHOENIX (Aug. 23, 2012) -- Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials announced today that Naco Sanitary District in Cochise County is the second wastewater district to participate in ADEQ's statewide program to help communities comply with state and federal environmental regulations.

ADEQ began its Small Communities Environmental Compliance Assistance Program in 2007 for small towns and special water and wastewater districts to sustain compliance with state and federal environmental laws and reduce the number of violations and enforcement actions. Six municipalities – Taylor, Holbrook, Show Low, Springerville, Eagar and Winslow – are in the program. In addition to Naco Sanitary District, the Pinetop-Lakeside Sanitary District also is a participant in the program.

As part of the program, the sanitary district, which serves about 880 customers in the unincorporated Naco community on Arizona's border with Mexico, agrees to disclose known environmental violations within the district, request compliance assistance before enforcement actions begin, participate in compliance evaluation to identify violations and to promptly correct known violations. In so doing, the town will be eligible for up to a 100 percent penalty reduction if it has future environmental violations.

“We are happy that Naco Sanitary District is a statewide leader in the effort to build sustainability and environmental cooperation and hope other wastewater and water districts and small towns will join the program,” said ADEQ Director Henry Darwin. “We are committed to helping small communities in the state comply with environmental laws and be good green stewards.”

The project was funded by a \$12,000 grant from the Environmental Council of States (ECOS) for the communities to develop Small Community Environmental Protection Plans (SCEPP) to improve compliance. Guidance materials, including a comprehensive manual, have been prepared to train small communities and water and wastewater districts on environmental requirements and help with SCEPP development.

For more information about the program, please visit:
<http://azdeq.gov/function/compliance/smallcomm.html>

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