

State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

News Release

Governor Bill Richardson Makes New Mexico First State to Join National Climate Change Effort

Chicago Climate Exchange Membership Furthers Efforts to Combat Global Warming

For Immediate Release

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(Santa Fe, NM) – Governor Bill Richardson today announced that New Mexico has become the first state in the nation to join the Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX), a greenhouse gas emission reduction and trading program. As a member of the exchange, Governor Richardson has set goals to reduce New Mexico state government’s emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) by 4% by 2006, and an additional 2% by 2010. State government’s primary sources of GHG are energy usage in office buildings and transportation.

“New Mexico is an energy state and we believe in market-based solutions to the Nation’s energy and environment challenges. We want to save money, use energy wisely, and help combat climate change,” said Governor Richardson. “That’s why the State of New Mexico is joining the Chicago Climate Exchange.”

New Mexico joins more than 100 other participants in this voluntary, legally binding trading program. Members include IBM, DuPont, and the Ford Motor Company, as well as the cities of Chicago, Oakland, and Boulder. New Mexico is the first state to participate in the CCX.

“We are delighted to welcome New Mexico as the first state to join CCX. New Mexico’s commitment to reduce emissions from its state government operations is unprecedented,” said Dr. Richard Sandor, CCX’s Chairman and CEO. “By taking direct action, Governor Richardson’s leadership reminds us that everyone -- governments, industry, and non-profits -- must be part of the solution to reduce the risks of global climate change.”

As a member of the exchange, New Mexico must meet its GHG reduction goals or buy credits to offset emissions above the targets. In the coming months, the New Mexico General Services Department (GSD) will complete an inventory of state government’s

GHG emissions. An independent third party auditor will then verify this emission baseline and perform annual audits. Emission credits are traded daily over the Internet at a current cost of about \$2.00 per metric ton of GHG emissions.

New Mexico will likely have to buy credits initially to offset emissions in the years 2003 and 2004 before the state joined the program. The cost of this buy will be dictated by the GSD inventory and CCX audit.

“Our membership in the CCX nicely complements New Mexico’s other, ongoing efforts to combat climate change and conserve energy,” said Governor Richardson. “By joining the CCX, state government is setting an example that I hope other municipalities and businesses will follow.”

On June 5th Governor Richardson signed an Executive Order mandating a thorough evaluation of ways to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in New Mexico, setting aggressive reduction goals, and creating the New Mexico Climate Change Advisory Group with broad industry and environmental representation.

The Governor’s Executive Order directs the Advisory Group to develop recommendations to reduce New Mexico’s total greenhouse gas emissions to 2000 levels by 2012, 10% below those levels by 2020, and 75% below 2000 levels by 2050. New Mexico’s 2000 total greenhouse gas emissions, including industry, were approximately 83 million metric tons.

Scientific data indicates that climate change could have a severe impact on New Mexico. Scientists have found that a warmer New Mexico would experience:

- A reduction in water supplies
- Shorter and warmer winters with winter precipitation falling more often as rain
- Earlier snowmelts
- Greater water loss due to evaporation
- More wildfires
- More extreme weather events, such as drought and floods
- Higher energy costs for cooling in the summer, and greater risk of heat related illnesses
- Disruptions to natural habitats and ecosystems (bark beetle infestation, for example)

Information on the Advisory Group can be found here: <http://www.nmclimatechange.us/> and on CCX at: <http://www.chicagoclimateexchange.com/>

For further information please contact Jon Goldstein, New Mexico Environment Department Communications Director, at (505) 827-0314.

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