

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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NAVAJO NATION TO TACKLE PROBLEM OF ILLEGAL DUMPING  
THROUGH AWARENESS, CLEAN UP PROGRAMS

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. The Navajo Nation Division of Community Development will tackle the persistent problem of illegal dumping through a continuing program of awareness and clean-up.

The Navajo Nation Solid Waste Department, New Mexico Environment Department and New Mexico Clean & Beautiful will host an Illegal Dumping Summit on Wednesday in Farmington, N.M. The summit will be from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Henderson Fine Arts Center, Room 9006 at San Juan Community College.

The summit will address how to implement an illegal dumping and prevention program, and how to prevent illegal dumping and coordinate a cleanup program.

"We're receiving money from the U.S. EPA on cleanup sites and also an awareness program on the Navajo Nation," said Division of Community Development Director Arbin Mitchell.

The summit will deal with the impact of illegal dumping on tourism, economic development and how to implement an illegal dumping prevention program.

In November, the division held illegal dumping workshops in Tuba City and Window Rock that featured presenters from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, he said. The goal, he said, is to increase awareness of Navajo people on the continuing illegal dumping problem.

"It's been a big problem but I believe with our solid waste program we're finally getting control," Mr. Mitchell said. "With a lot of awareness, we'll get more control. Even with the money we receive, there's still a lot to clean up. This summit is part of our awareness program."

Mr. Mitchell said the Navajo Nation has a joint powers agreement with Coconino County in Arizona to operate a transfer station in Tuba City which serves the eight surrounding chapters. He said it also has an agreement with San Juan County in New Mexico that serves seven chapters within District 14 and the chapters surrounding Tohatchi, N.M.

"What we want to do with this is first come in and pay for some of these services," he said. "But our ultimate goal is to have some of these chapters take on this initiative later on."

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ADDITIONAL SOURCE

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