

## Environment Department releases COVID-19 Watchlist

Written by Staff Reports

Thursday, 19 November 2020 16:00

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### **List includes New Mexico businesses with two or more rapid responses within the last 14 days**

The New Mexico Environment Department has updated its daily Rapid Response COVID-19 Watchlist, which includes New Mexico places of employment that have had two or more rapid responses in the last 14 days. There are currently 160 establishments on the Watchlist.

Two locations in Gallup made the list on Nov. 11: City of Gallup (110 W. Aztec Ave.) and Applebee's (1560 W. Maloney Ave.). On Nov. 8, Gallup had one location on the list: O'Reilly Auto Parts (1630 E. Hwy. 66).

A rapid response is initiated when the state learns of a positive COVID-19 case in the workplace. NMED or the state agency initiating the rapid response offers direction to establishments regarding testing, quarantining and isolating, disinfecting, and COVID-Safe Practices.

The Watchlist currently only includes organizations for which NMED conducts rapid responses, including grocery stores, restaurants, retail stores, gyms, salons and business offices.

The Rapid Response COVID-19 Watchlist allows the public to make more informed decisions when patronizing establishments and also assists NMED's Occupational Health and Safety Bureau and other state and local regulatory agencies in evaluating whether organizations are complying with state public health orders and COVID-Safe Practices. State regulatory agencies may initiate compliance investigations and/or exercise enforcement when establishments fail to adhere to required practices.

The current public health order mandates certain establishments close for two weeks if they have four or more rapid responses within the last 14 days. For the purposes of this requirement,

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the rapid response count started at zero on Oct. 23. The closure requirement applies to food and drink establishments, retail spaces, places of lodging, close-contact businesses as defined in the Oct. 22 public health order, and any other establishment that poses a significant public health risk as determined by the Department of Health.

When there are four or more rapid responses at a location within 14 calendar days, the NMED will refer the establishment to the Department of Health, which will evaluate and make the decision on establishment closure. An establishment may be permitted to continue operating if the DOH, after consultation with the NMED, determines that the business is a sole provider of goods or services within a community.