



EDD ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 27, 2022

LEDA to Assist Family Business in Curry County *Melrose Tire investment will retain rural employment base*

SANTA FE, N.M. – The State of New Mexico is pledging LEDA assistance to a family business in Melrose, N.M. so it can replace its above-ground gasoline storage tanks and continue to operate as a vital economic hub, Economic Development Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes announced today.

Melrose Tire opened in 1991 and has been owned by Terry and Chassidy England since 2009. The business is the only fuel/tire service center and restaurant in the Curry County Village of Melrose, population 616.

The \$360,000 from the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) will allow the business to replace its above-ground fuel tanks with underground tanks that meet environmental regulations. The Village of Melrose is supporting the project with an additional \$40,000.

Without the investments, Melrose Tire, the largest employer in the village with 15 workers, would have to close or curtail operations.

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham has advocated for stronger economic development in rural communities. The funding for Melrose Tire is made possible due to a governor-led change to the LEDA statute in 2020 (SB118), which allows for assistance to retail projects in communities with a population of 15,000 or less.

“We have ever-changing challenges to growing New Mexico’s economy, especially in smaller rural areas,” Cabinet Secretary Keyes said. “This investment is aimed at supporting a vital economic business in Curry County and proves we can innovate and use LEDA and other tools to assist rural communities so families can prosper.”

The Village of Melrose serves as the fiscal agent for the project. The assistance is pending Village Council approval.

“Melrose Tire is the biggest employer in Melrose, which is a small village. If they’re forced to close, the economic impact to the Village of Melrose and the surrounding area is huge, not just for the employees but for the village residents as well as the surrounding agriculture-based businesses who will be forced to drive an additional 50-60 miles round-trip to get fuel or tires,” Melrose Mayor Barry Green.

Melrose Tire was established in 1991 by Dale Bigler. Terry England started working in the tire shop in 2004. He was then joined by wife Chassidy, who managed the store and restaurant. When Bigler sought to retire, he turned to the couple who were interested in ownership. They have since been joined by their three teenage sons who now work in the business, which is open seven days a week.

“The LEDA assistance is vital so we don’t have to close or scale back any part of this business,” Chassidy England said. “COVID was a big hit to us, so this is very important for us to be able to do improvement work, and keep our employees and maybe hire more. “It would be a big loss to the community if we were not able to continue to operate.”

Chassidy England said the business has 425 service accounts and has an operations truck that travels as far as Amarillo and Lubbock to help replace or repair tires for tractors and farm equipment, often with hard-to-find products.

The LEDA infrastructure project includes new fuel lines and electric work, three 12,000-gallon fuel tanks and one 4,000-gallon tank. The work is expected to begin in July.

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The New Mexico Economic Development Department's (EDD) mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive.

EDD's programs contribute directly to this mission by providing funding to train our workforce, providing infrastructure that supports business growth, and helping every community create a thriving economy. Since Jan. 1, 2019, EDD has supported more than 13,000 new jobs and trained 8,323 New Mexicans for better pay. EDD has utilized LEDA to make investments in 53 businesses, supporting more than 7,500 new jobs at an average wage of \$70,000, \$531 million in annual payroll, \$5.2 billion in new capital investment, and a ten-year economic impact of \$30+ billion. Thirty-nine communities across 22 counties have benefited from EDD programs.



Chassidy England, left to right, Brenden England, Jaden England, and Terry England. Not pictured, Gauge England. Photos courtesy of Melrose Tire.

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