

Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards

2014 Event Program



Monday, December 8, 2014

Co-Sponsors:

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
New Jersey Corporation for Advanced Technology



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Background Information about the Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards Program

The Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards Program was established in 2000 by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to recognize outstanding environmental performance, programs and projects in the state.

Since the program's inception, 135 awards have been presented to representatives of businesses and corporations, municipalities, schools and universities, organizations and individuals.

This afternoon we are presenting awards to eleven winners in the following categories:

Clean Air
Water Resources
Healthy Ecosystems
Innovative Technology
Land Conservation
Healthy & Sustainable Businesses
Healthy & Sustainable Communities
Environmental Education: Educator-led
Environmental Education: Student-led
Environmentalist of the Year

The Department is proud to be the coordinating agency for this awards program for the 15th year along with our co-sponsor, the New Jersey Corporation for Advanced Technology (NJCAT). The program is supported this year by PSEG, New Jersey Natural Gas, Duke Farms, New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust and Atlantic County Utilities Authority. Promotional support was provided by our partner, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

Administrative support is provided by the Commissioner's Office and the Office of Communications, with assistance from Compliance and Enforcement's Environmental Stewardship Initiative. Applications were reviewed and scored by more than 30 department professionals.

To view photos and information about this afternoon's winners or to review information about past winners or the program itself, please visit the program's website. The Department will begin to promote the 2015 Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards Program application in the spring.

The Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards Program
www.nj.gov/dep/eeawards

Information about the Co-Sponsor and Partners

Co-Sponsor: New Jersey Corporation for Advanced Technology

The New Jersey Corporation for Advanced Technology (NJCAT) is a private/public partnership that pools the best talents and diverse resources of business and industry, entrepreneurs, university research centers, utilities and government, to promote the development and commercialization of exciting, new energy and environmental technologies. To learn more about NJCAT, please visit www.njcat.org or contact:

Richard Magee, Ph.D., NJCAT Technical Director
Center for Environmental Systems
Stevens Institute of Technology
Castle Point on Hudson
Hoboken, New Jersey 07030
973.879.3056

Partner: New Jersey State League of Municipalities

The New Jersey State League of Municipalities is a voluntary association created to help communities do a better job of self-government through pooling information resources and brain power. It is authorized by State Statute and since 1915 has been serving local officials throughout the Garden State. All 565 municipalities are members of the League. Over 560 mayors and 13,000 elected and appointed officials of member municipalities are entitled to all of the services and privileges of the League. To learn more about the association please visit: www.njslom.org.

Partner: Environmental Stewardship Initiative

The Environmental Stewardship Initiative is a recognition program developed by Compliance & Enforcement for use by all NJDEP programs that conduct compliance assurance inspections. The goal of this initiative is to encourage regulated entities to improve their environmental performance beyond the minimum requirements of existing rules and regulations, recognize environmentally proactive businesses for their efforts, showcase their achievements to others in the regulated community and provide guidance and encouragement for others to follow. To learn more about the Department's Environmental Stewardship Initiative please visit: www.nj.gov/dep/enforcement/stewardship.

Winners of the 2014 Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards

Category: Clean Air

Winner: Monmouth University

Accepting the award: Rick Su, Director of Service Response for Special Events

This award is presented to a nominee that demonstrates a commitment to, and experience in, one or more of the following areas and activities:

- *Reducing air pollution emissions and/or reducing outdoor exposure to toxic air contaminants;*
- *Reducing greenhouse gas emissions or equivalents through energy efficiency projects or green power purchases; and*
- *Reducing air deposition loading to land and water.*

In 2009, Monmouth University in Monmouth County signed an agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency pledging to implement green initiatives to reduce its carbon footprint and improve the environment. The university calculates it has since reduced its carbon footprint by the equivalent of 37,000 metric tons. The college employs two solar electrical systems that generate more than 1 megawatt of electricity, coats roofs of campus buildings with a material that reduces interior building temperatures and lessens cooling power needs, added electric powered golf carts to its campus fleet of vehicles, and is piloting a hybrid gas/electric vehicle for campus police. Also, the university offers a minor degree in global sustainability and offers students opportunities for research and sustainability activities. In 2014, Monmouth University received a \$5 million Challenge Grant to increase student research on environmental trends.

Category: Water Resources

Winners: John Jengo and Gene Meyer

*Accepting the award: John Jengo, Principal Hydrogeologist, MWH Global, Inc.
Gene Meyer, Project Manager, Kinder Morgan, Inc.*

This award is presented to a nominee that demonstrates a positive influence in one or more of the following areas and activities:

- *Improving surface or ground water quality;*
- *Ensuring sufficient quantities of water through reuse and conservation techniques; and*
- *Promoting or developing progressive land use policies and watershed management approaches to improve the protection of surface and groundwater resources.*

John Jengo, a licensed site remediation professional for MWH Global and Gene Meyer, former Eastern Regional Manager for El Paso Corporation (now under Kinder Morgan), worked together on a Natural Resources Damages (NRD) project to remove three outdated dams from the Raritan River in Somerset County, to make the river free flowing. Included was the 2011 removal of the Nevius Street Dam in Raritan Borough, a structure used for 100 years by Duke Farms for water supply to its lake system. The project restored migratory fish passage to spawning grounds in the Raritan River; restored pond ecosystems at Duke Farms; and lowered nutrient levels, which is significant because the ponds are a stopover for migratory birds. Jengo and Meyer side-stepped potential litigation and resolved NRD damage claims resulting from activities at several former industrial sites on the river. This project is a model for effective public-private partnerships.

Category: Healthy Ecosystems**Winner: Ewa Zak, Montgomery Township, Somerset County***Accepting the award: Ewa Zak, Chair, Shade Tree Committee*

This award is presented to a nominee that demonstrates experience in programs or techniques that have resulted in the restoration, protection and enhancement of the State's ecological resources. These resources include wetlands, estuaries and coastal areas, as well as non-game and/or threatened and endangered species.

Ms. Zak has been a volunteer leader in the "greening" of Montgomery Township for 28 years. She has advocated for tree plantings, tree preservation, hedgerows and green belts. She spearheaded formation of the township's Shade Tree Committee in 1986 and ensured Committee involvement in planning board applications. She was instrumental in passage of "green" ordinances, such as the required planting of 14 trees per-acre in new subdivisions and creation of a Tree Bank financed by funds from developers. Other accomplishments of Ms. Zak include:

- Developed a municipal planting plan for "areas of need" that has resulted in the planting of more than 1,700 trees on 40 residential streets;
- Developed an Arbor Day curriculum for 3rd graders (now in its 28th year);
- Responsible for much of the landscaping at the township's parks; and
- Spent countless hours choosing tree stock, marking planting locations, supervising installations and visiting sites to prune and water trees.

Ms. Zak also is "on call" to residents for advice on tree care and often makes "house calls" to assess the health of trees.

Category: Innovative Technology**Winner: South Monmouth Regional Sewerage Authority (SMRSA)***Accepting the award: Michael Ruppel, Executive Director, SMRSA
Ken Farrell, Chairman, Commissioner - Sea Girt*

This award is presented to a nominee that demonstrates the use or deployment of a new or alternative method, procedure, process, system or facility, which results in greater environmental protection than other technologies in current practice or comparable results at lower costs in terms of energy, natural resources or environmental impacts.

The South Monmouth Regional Sewerage Authority (SMRSA) operates 11 sewage pump stations in Monmouth County. Its station in Sea Girt suffered repeat damage and outages due to storm flooding. In 2010, a project team designed a mobile enclosure to make the station more resilient to future storms. The mobile facility consists of two rooms, one each for an emergency generator and electrical equipment. During storms the mobile facility is moved to higher ground while an expendable portable generator and transfer switch power the station. Once the storm subsides, the mobile facility is moved back in place and hooked up to the pump station. The mobile system minimizes damage, reduces plant down time, and lessens the potential of sewer overflows. SMRSA estimated \$1.5 million dollars in savings since 2010 because there was no substantial damage to the Sea Girt station during Hurricane Irene and Superstorm Sandy. The design was deemed a best management practice by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Category: Land Conservation

Winner: Morris County Flood Mitigation Program/Morris County Freeholders

*Accepting the award: Jennifer McCulloch, Flood Mitigation Program Coordinator/ Morris County
Laura Szwak, Vice Chair, Flood Mitigation Committee/Morris County*

This award is presented to a nominee that demonstrates a commitment to, and experience in, the preservation of open space that protects land from future development.

In response to intense flooding caused by Hurricane Irene in 2011, Morris County created the first county-wide program in New Jersey dedicated to acquiring flood-prone homes and land. The program offers county grants to buy properties in areas prone to flooding, to move residents out of harm's way and reclaim lost floodplain acreage to capture and store floodwaters. These acquisitions help to buffer adjacent homes and businesses from flooding, lower municipal costs for emergency response, and allow participating homeowners to escape the expensive and destructive cycle of repetitive flooding. To date, Morris County has closed on 43 homes or properties with an additional 77 applications in 8 municipalities being processed. Numerous demolitions and post-preservation park plans have been completed. The program currently has \$17.3 million earmarked for acquisitions and has garnered more than \$29 million in federal and state grants.

Category: Healthy and Sustainable Businesses (1st of 2 Winners - a Tie)

Winner: DSM Nutritional Products, LLC

*Accepting the award: Hugh Welsh, President and General Counsel, DSM North America
Diana Ceaser, Senior Manager, Safety, Health and Environment*

This award is presented to a nominee that demonstrates a commitment to, and experience in, any of the following activities:

- *An activity that addresses pollution/waste reduction, recycling, land use, local purchasing, sustainability, resource conservation or product stewardship;*
- *Innovative practices or technologies that have resulted in the private or public sector clean up and redevelopment of contaminated/brownfields sites; and*
- *Creation of community-based initiatives that foster involvement, action and effective solutions to the adverse effects of industrial pollution in overburdened and low-income communities.*

DSM Nutritional Products (DSM) in Belvidere is a vitamin manufacturer under the umbrella of corporate parent company Royal DSM, which encourages sustainable business practices. To reduce air emissions, DSM installed a 10 megawatt natural gas co-generation plant to substantially cut NOx and CO2 emissions, shifted some internal combustion engines that ran on diesel to electric drive, and provided 25 acres for a solar installation. To reduce waste products, DSM recycles industrial materials, such as drums, batteries, pallets and all wood; seeks reuse options for unneeded food grade materials, such as plans to divert 30 tons of sugars and starches annually from landfills to animal feed production; and upgraded laboratory analytical equipment to new technology which uses less solvent, eliminating 100 gallons per year of hazardous waste. Also, DSM operates its own wastewater treatment plant and uses two compost facilities, with 100 percent of sludge annually diverted from landfills.

Category: Healthy and Sustainable Businesses (2nd of 2 Winners - a Tie)

Winner: Earth Friendly Products – Eastern Division

*Accepting the award: Nadereh Afsharmanesh, Ph.D., Vice President of Sustainability
Kenneth Teich, General Manager*

Earth Friendly Products manufactures some 150 environmentally friendly “green” household and commercial cleaning products that are free of caustics, chlorine bleach, phosphates, and other toxins. The company has sought to make its New Jersey operation a model environmental facility. Its products are tracked from raw material to final manufacture and it acquires ingredients locally. Beginning in 2010, the Parsippany facility enhanced its recycling procedures, including the separation of material and reuse of cafeteria implements, such as cups, plates and utensils. These actions reduced waste by 90 percent, cut the monthly trash pick-up bill from \$1,800 to \$311, and generated \$33,000 in recycling revenues. Earth Friendly Products offsets its energy consumption by making the manufacturing power process 100 percent green. It generates 200,000 kWh/year by in-house solar panels and purchases 1 million kWh/year through Renewable Energy Choice, helping to make the operation carbon neutral since 2013. Also, employees are encouraged to pursue sustainable lifestyles through a \$2,000 incentive to purchase eco-friendly cars, \$1,000 incentive to relocate within 10 miles of the facility, and \$2,000 to install solar panels on their homes. The company also published a book for children titled, *Tips for Students of the Earth*.

Category: Healthy and Sustainable Communities

Winner: Georgian Court University

*Accepting the award: Louise Wootton, Ph.D., Chair of Biology, Director of Sustainability
Kaitlyn Hanson, Student*

This award is presented to a nominee that demonstrates a commitment to, and experience in, any of the following activities:

- *An activity that addresses pollution/waste reduction, recycling, land use, local purchasing, sustainability, resource conservation or product stewardship;*
- *Innovative practices or technologies that have resulted in the private or public sector clean up and redevelopment of contaminated/brownfields sites; and*
- *Creation of community-based initiatives that foster involvement, action and effective solutions to the adverse effects of industrial pollution in overburdened and low-income communities.*

In 2007, Georgian Court University was one of the first higher education institutions in the nation to commit to carbon neutrality. The university, based in Lakewood, has since demonstrated its commitment to sustainability through curriculum, campus activities, facilities management, business practice, and community engagement. GCU built a LEED Gold status wellness center, installed 2,500 solar panels to provide 900 KWH of electricity; added electric carts to the campus vehicle fleet, replaced older and inefficient vehicles, installed 80 low-flow shower heads in residence halls, and installed ceramic window films over 200 large windows in the main building to increase insulation. The university maintains the Mercy Garden and Wellness Garden, placed 4th among 272 institutions for its 75 percent recycling rate in the 2014 “Recyclemania” contest, and hosts a \$250,000 experimental stormwater basin research project in partnership with Rutgers University and the NJDEP, from which it has been recognized for many achievements in stewardship. It also hosts seminars and demonstrations for campus and community members on environmental issues that are important to the local area.

Category: Environmental Education: Educator-led
Winner: New York – New Jersey Trail Conference

Accepting the award: Peter Dolan, New Jersey Program Coordinator

Nominees in these two categories should demonstrate implementation of a program or project that has measurable positive impacts in environmental protection and education. One award will be given to an adult educator and one will be given to students/youth in grades K-12 (student involvement must be emphasized).

The NY-NJ Trail Conference is a nonprofit group with a membership of 10,000 individuals and 100 clubs, bringing together more than 100,000 active, outdoor-loving people. Since 1920, the Conference has created, protected and promoted a network of 2,000 miles of public trails. It organizes volunteer service projects to keep these trails open, safe and enjoyable. The NY-NJ Trail Conference's recently established "Trail University" program is designed to improve the quality of public trails by increasing the trail-related knowledge, understanding and skill base of its volunteers, staff and partners. Their workshops are taught by professionals and experienced volunteers, with topics ranging from trail building and maintenance, to shelter caretaking and stone splitting. In the past 12 months, 263 Trail University attendees have contributed 1,100 hours of service in New Jersey by participating in on-the-trail courses. Many of New Jersey's State Parks and Forests rely on the NY-NJ Trail Conference volunteers to keep trails maintained, well-marked and safe for public access, in addition to reducing erosion and protecting sensitive habitats and aquatic areas. In 2013, volunteers donated almost 17,000 hours to help benefit State public lands.

Category: Environmental Education: Student-led
Winner: Williamstown Middle School Environmental Club
Monroe Township Public Schools, Gloucester County

Accepting the award: Janet Mead, Science Teacher
Sandy Keen, Volunteer Advisor and Rutgers Environmental Steward

Middle school science teacher Janet Mead and Sandy Keen, a Rutgers Environmental Steward and Master Gardener, created the "Community of Caring Gardens" environmental program at Williamstown Middle School. It was a natural fit for the environmental club at a school located at the headwaters of the Great Egg Harbor River and in a town with 3,000 acres of environmentally protected Pinelands habitat. The environmental club engages 150 students in grades 5-8. These student volunteers lead and accomplish projects, such as creating gardens for native species, growing vegetables for the community, constructing portable habitats, making rain barrels and rain gardens to reduce erosion, building bird houses, improving recycling efforts, and building fish ponds. The projects are funded by donations and promoted to the community via a school website. On a larger scale, Williamstown Middle School also is participating in NJDEP's Project Learning Tree Green Schools Program, earning ECO-Schools USA certification through NJ Audubon, and is working with the Monroe Township Green Team in Sustainable Jersey's program for municipalities.

Category: Environmentalist of the Year

Winner: John McCormac, Mayor of Woodbridge Township, Middlesex County

*Accepting the award: John McCormac, Mayor
Caroline Ehrlich, Chief of Staff*

Nominees in this category should demonstrate committed values toward the environment and an appreciation of it and their accomplishments should contribute to the conservation, restoration and protection of New Jersey's natural resources and environmental quality.

Since becoming mayor in 2006, John McCormac implemented environmental and sustainable programs to protect and restore the environment, while taking into account Woodbridge's economic and financial factors. His accomplishments support his belief that "if you go green, you will save green."

Under Mayor McCormac's leadership, Woodbridge Township received \$2.4 million in rebates from the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities to install solar panels at six municipal buildings, secured \$5 million in open space funds from the county for preservation, and implemented single stream recycling that reduced his town's land-fill disposal costs by \$135,000 while increasing recycling by 44 percent (to 65 percent in 2013, far above any larger town in New Jersey). Mayor McCormac also:

- Worked with the school board to conduct energy audits of school buildings that led to building upgrades and energy conservation measures.
- Backed remediation of 29 acres at a former manufacturing site, part of the Keasbey Redevelopment Zone, to clear a path to locate a future energy complex as part of the redevelopment of this brownfield site.
- Fostered, through the municipal Redevelopment Agency, restoration of more than 100 acres of wetlands along the Raritan River and construction of the future Woodbridge Waterfront Park.
- Helped forge a partnership between the township and CIEL Power to offer a Township-wide Home Energy Assessment program. For a low fee, homeowners can get a home energy assessment and qualify for up to \$5,000 in rebates or a \$10,000 zero-interest loan to incorporate energy saving improvements.

In addition, Woodridge Township has been named the Sustainable Jersey champion for four years and has been selected as a pilot community in the national program of STAR (Sustainability Tools for Assessing and Rating Communities), in conjunction with Sustainable Jersey and Rutgers University.