

NJMC NEWS RELEASE

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**New Jersey
Meadowlands
Commission**

NJMC Announces Solar Initiatives *Projects to Bolster Clean Energy Production, Economic Growth in Meadowlands*

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission today announced a series of solar energy initiatives to help boost renewable energy production and spur economic growth and green job creation in the Meadowlands region.

The projects include:

- Expanding the Commission’s pilot Municipal Solar Assistance program to all Meadowlands District municipalities and school districts.
- Constructing a solar-powered parking canopy at the Commission’s headquarters.
- Launching a joint initiative with PSE&G to create a multi-megawatt solar installation on a closed landfill and provide District municipalities with funding for renewable energy and energy conservation projects.

“Through these creative and forward-thinking programs the NJMC can better help Meadowlands District municipalities conserve energy and save taxpayer dollars,” said Lori Grifa, Acting Chairman of the NJMC and Acting Commissioner of the state Department of Community Affairs. “As a driver of economic growth and environmental responsibility, renewable energy production is critical to our state’s fiscal and environmental future.”

In 2008 the NJMC created a pilot Municipal Solar Assistance Program to help District municipalities and school districts develop renewable energy resources. The program has proved popular and the Commission has performed assessments for several towns and schools to determine whether certain roofs are suitable for solar panels. By expanding this free service to all 14 towns and school districts in the Meadowlands District, the NJMC can help additional public bodies with the costly processes involved in developing solar projects.

The Commission also aims to increase renewable energy production on its campus by constructing a solar canopy over its main parking lot in DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst. The Commission will negotiate a contract with SunDurance Energy to build the canopy, which will supply approximately 20 percent of the electricity used at the NJMC’s administration building, reducing the Commission’s energy costs and its carbon footprint.

In keeping with the NJMC’s goal to make productive use of its closed landfills, the Commission will enter into a joint initiative with PSE&G in which the power utility would build a grid-connected solar farm on NJMC-

owned former landfill space. PSE&G would build, own and operate the facility and make lease payments to the NJMC. The company's initial plans call for a solar installation that can generate up to 20 megawatts of low-cost, clean energy. PSE&G is required to obtain approval from the state Board of Public Utilities prior to commencement of this project.

The NJMC would use funding from PSE&G's lease payments on the property to create the Meadowlands Renewable Energy Fund. This program, known as MREF, would be used by the NJMC to provide grants to District municipalities for sustainable, renewable energy and energy conservation projects. The fund would augment the Commission's ongoing commitment to helping District municipalities conserve energy and associated costs, including \$280,000 the Commission allocated to District towns for use toward the purchase of fuel-efficient hybrid vehicles.

The new initiatives build upon NJMC solar projects already underway. These include the Commission's plan to construct a solar array on the closed 1A landfill in Kearny. The project, which is in contract negotiations, received \$8.5 million in federal stimulus funding last year through the state Board of Public Utilities and is expected to generate about 3 megawatts of electricity.

In addition, the NJMC has reduced its development fees for private developers who want to include solar components on buildings within the District. In the past year alone the Commission received a half-dozen development applications that included solar elements. The Commission also constructed a classroom building in DeKorte Park that features solar panels and other sustainable features. The building, which serves as a teaching tool and as an example to developers, was the first public facility in the state to be awarded a LEED Platinum rating – the highest available – from the U.S. Green Building Council.

“The NJMC has long advocated renewable and alternative energy projects as crucial to shaping an economically and environmentally sustainable Meadowlands,” said Robert Ceberio, the NJMC's executive director. “We are thoroughly committed to using our resources to help produce clean energy, cost savings and economic development throughout the region.”

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