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## **County, State Officials Unveil “Green” Web Site**

**MARCH 9, 2010** – Middlesex County Freeholder H. James Polos was joined this morning by State officials for the launch of the County’s new Sustainability Web site, the first result of the Middlesex County Sustainability Plan. The plan is the first of its kind in New Jersey and will be used as a model statewide.

The Web site, [www.mcset.com](http://www.mcset.com), will be used as a channel for communication and reference for County departments, municipal governments, citizens, businesses and civic organizations to provide ongoing feedback on where the County is, where it is heading and where it needs to be to move toward sustainable development.

A sustainable community is one that protects the resources and systems that support residents today so that they will be available to future generations. While several towns throughout the state are working toward sustainability, no other county has developed a plan.

“Once again, Middlesex County finds itself at the forefront of sustainable and “green” initiatives in the State,” said Freeholder Polos, who has spearheaded Middlesex County’s many energy efficient initiatives and policies. “We are working aggressively to define our goals and track our progress so that we can ensure a clean environment and smart growth today and in the future.”

Polos said the County’s sustainable and green efforts have already saved taxpayers \$140,000 this year alone, when the County replaced the HVAC system at one of its buildings through a PSE&G program that paid 80 percent of the installation cost. The new energy efficient system will lower the County’s energy costs, he said.

The Middlesex County Sustainability Plan will have a tracking system (indicators and targets). Goals include using efficient, clean and secure energy, a vibrant economy, pollution prevention, improved transportation and mobility and the preservation of natural resources.

The State Department of Community Affairs (DCA) awarded Middlesex County a \$75,000 Smart Future grant to fund the 16-month-long project between the New Jersey Sustainable State Institute and Middlesex County that is developing the Sustainability Plan.

The County will continue to work with its municipal government partners, the State, private business, schools and individuals to promote green initiatives, and to foster the

idea that quality of life is improved when you have a vibrant economy, an engaged society and a healthy environment.

Randall Solomon, executive director of NJ Sustainable State Institute, said bringing County government together with local business, healthcare, education and non-profit leaders strengthens sustainability efforts.

“The County wants to do its part to help New Jersey achieve its statewide goal of a 20 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 and an 80 percent reduction by 2050,” Solomon said. “But County government only controls a very small portion of the total emissions in Middlesex County. That is why it is essential to have active participation and support from the citizens, businesses, and municipalities on this initiative.”

Middlesex County is a recognized leader in energy efficient programs, and received the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) 2007 Clean Energy Award for the Middlesex County Showroom of Environmental Technology (MCSET). Through MCSET, the County assists municipalities, agencies, authorities and schools with implementing clean energy technologies and sustainability programs.

Middlesex County is the first – and only -- county in the State to coordinate resources and facilitate information between state agencies and local officials, in order to boost local efforts to obtain grant funding and program support from the BPU and the State Department of Environmental Protection.