
Press Release

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FREEHOLDERS PURSUE GREEN ENERGY SAVINGS AT COUNTY SEAT

Energy Cost-Saving Upgrades Planned For Mount Holly Complex.

Burlington County Freeholders advanced the County's cost-reducing green energy program a major step forward today when they tentatively approved \$3.2 million in energy savings upgrades for the three major facilities at the Mount Holly complex.

A grant-funded energy audit performed earlier this year by Concord Engineering of Voorhees identified equipment in the Administration Building, Courts Facility, and Detention Center that could – and should -- be removed and replaced, including HVAC components such as boilers and chillers that have outlived their usefulness.

The energy savings upgrades will reduce the utility costs for these three County buildings by approximately 10 percent on an annual basis.

"This is about reducing utility costs and, in the process, saving tax dollars," said Freeholder Director Bruce Garganio. "It's just that simple. At the same time, the County is setting an example for our towns and schools who are exploring green energy."

Freeholders are already partnering with the Burlington County Bridge Commission in the implementation of a "Greenbacks-To-Go-Green" program, to assist towns in securing grants for energy audits, to develop energy savings plans, and to finance upgrades.

At last count, 64 municipalities, school districts, and utility authorities were in the process of pursuing alternative energy improvements through the Greenbacks program. Typically these include improvements to lighting systems, motion sensors, hot water systems, windows and doors, and HVAC systems.

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In addition, the bridge commission is moving forward with a plan of its own to install about \$286,000 in upgrades, ranging from upgraded lighting to new HVAC components. Estimated savings over 15 years will be about \$498,000.

“There’s no escaping it – conserving energy to gain cost savings is the way to go,” Garganio said. “Those towns who are working through the Greenbacks program are getting valuable guidance, even as the rules for the State’s energy grants have changed.”

The initial energy audit of the County complex was funded with a \$30,000 grant from the Board of Public Utilities. The BPU also sponsors grants for modest upgrades through other programs, including Direct Install and the Smart Start Prescriptive Measures Program.

Concord calculated current energy costs for the three buildings in the Mount Holly complex (electricity and natural gas) at more than \$1.1 million annually. That tab will be reduced to come in at approximately \$995,000 once all improvements are made.

Concord is expected to be awarded a contract for engineering and construction administration at the freeholders’ meeting of June 8, 2011.

Meantime, freeholders recently awarded a contract to EMSA Solar LLC of Parlin, NJ, for another major element of the County’s energy plan, the construction of a mounted solar panel array on the grounds adjacent to the Engineering facility on Route 38 in Mount Laurel. The firm’s winning bid was \$1,826,300.

Most of that cost will be covered by a \$3.1 million federal stimulus grant the County received last year. Once in place and operating, the solar panel array is expected to generate enough electricity for the engineering and highway offices and garages on the site.

The remaining portion of the grant may be allocated to the work at the County complex. Freeholders also will evaluate bonding options.

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