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PSE&G, Whitman Partner To Support Cities Dealing With Brownfields

By Betsy Kraat

NEWARK--To help New Jersey communities addressing brownfield remediation, Public Service Electric & Gas (PSE&G) subsidiary PSEG Economic Development Services LLC and Whitman, the state's leading environmental, engineering and management firm, have teamed-up to support cities with a new brownfields redevelopment initiative designed to help municipalities understand property contamination issues and what can be done to remediate these sites and attract new tax generating business.

"The potentially positive impact of brownfields and their ability to improve a community's tax base by getting them back into productive working condition isn't commonly understood," said Frank Lucchesi, Area Development Manager with PSE&G. "Many municipalities do not know that they can apply for a free initial assessment through PSE&G, and that once a preliminary evaluation is completed by our team, the municipality may qualify for various funding sources including feasibility and market studies."

Michael Sylvester, Vice President of business development and marketing for Whitman, said his company has completed over 2,500 site assessments and remedial investigations since its founding in 1985. In addition, Whitman has helped secure millions of dollars in state and federal funding for developers and municipalities to aid in environmental clean up.

"As a company, we have worked to help relieve the burden of clean up on developers and municipalities," Sylvester said. "But this initiative with PSE&G offers municipalities even greater benefits by implementing both planning and environmental remediation simultaneously while the municipality shops for an end user."

Lucchesi said that businesses have historically backed away from redeveloping brownfields sites, but with the combined experience of PSE&G and Whitman, there is a greater opportunity for rehabilitating these former industrial sites without incurring debt or dealing with lengthy project periods. PSE&G can also help municipalities develop a site usage plan that will further aid them in attracting new business.

"If we can get municipalities to consider doing an initial assessment, they will be well on their way to attracting new business to the Garden State," Lucchesi commented. "PSE&G's Area Development Department actively works with businesses inside and outside New Jersey that are considering relocating in the state and generating new jobs. We do this by supporting companies with a wide range of valuable real estate and economic development services, including site selection and location assistance, environmental guidance and incentive consultation."