

SWEENEY, SMITH, GREENSTEIN TOURS TRENTON BIOGAS

The State's First Large Scale Organic Recycling Facility

TRENTON – Senate President Steve Sweeney and Senator Bob Smith toured Trenton Biogas today, getting a firsthand view of a clean energy facility that will convert organic waste from households and businesses into useful natural gas. The former sludge plant is being retrofitted as an "integrated bio-refinery" to recycle food waste and produce electrical power and agricultural nutrients.

It will be the first large-scale facility of its type in New Jersey, capable of turning 100,000 tons of food waste per year into environmentally-friendly energy.

"This is a smart and resourceful way to generate clean energy and reduce costs for local governments and their residents," said Senator Sweeney (D-Gloucester / Salem / Cumberland). "Adopting new technologies to serve the needs of the public is an important part of creating jobs, expanding the state's economic abilities and improving our environmental sustainability."

Trenton Biogas has a lease-purchase agreement to take over the former sludge plant from Trenton, Hamilton, Ewing and Lawrence, which jointly own the site. With the capacity to recycle more than 100,000 tons of food waste each year, and with highly competitive disposal fees, Biogas is preparing to offer an outlet for food waste that has not existed in New Jersey. Trenton Biogas has already saved hundreds of thousands of dollars of expenses for these municipalities as well as Mercer County by taking over the property.

"The Biogas facility is the first step in filling a massive void in New Jersey," said Senator Smith (D-Middlesex / Somerset). "I look forward to the facility opening and I hope it inspires the creation of more bio-refineries around the state. As climate change continues to progress it is more important than ever that we invest in alternative forms of energy."

"We have already seen what climate change is doing to New Jersey," said Senator Greenstein (D-Mercer / Middlesex). "We need to approach the issue from every angle and this facility is an innovative way of diversifying our energy grid and lowering our dependency on fossil fuels for electricity. I hope we can see many more of these built in our state and around the country."

The availability of the facility could make it more appealing for local towns and businesses that produce large amounts of food waste to separate it from their normal trash stream. Towns and institutions currently pay significant fees on the waste they send to distant landfills but will now be able to make use of Trenton Biogas to lower their disposal costs.

"This is a highly efficient system for converting organic waste from households and

businesses into useful methane gas, in order to produce electricity with reduced amounts of carbon," said Peter Joseph, Chairman of Trenton Biogas. "This will help communities in Mercer County reduce disposal costs in an environmentally-friendly way by making use of new technologies."

More than 1.5 million tons of food waste is generated annually in New Jersey. Much of it is shipped out of state, which imposes costs on municipalities and counties. The organic waste includes everything from potato peelings and dinner plate scraps to restaurant leftovers and the produce that spoils in local supermarkets.

Capturing methane by converting organic waste in a way that allows it to be used as a fuel is a tremendous benefit in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Methane is used as a fuel for ovens, homes, water heaters, kilns, automobiles, turbines, and other things. Compared to other hydrocarbon fuels, methane produces less carbon dioxide for each unit of heat released.