



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 2, 2005

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Honors Go to Those Helping to Keep the Garden State “Green”

(NEWARK, NJ) Keeping the Garden State green is not an easy job, but for this year’s recipients of the Green Community Achievement Awards, it’s a labor of love. The awards, given annually by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, highlight outstanding efforts in the field of urban and community forestry. This year’s winner in the business category was PSE&G. Never before has a utility company been recognized with this honor.

Well known for its focused community outreach, PSE&G employs a number of specially trained foresters who make volunteerism and education a priority. They have assisted volunteers in planting hundreds of trees in communities across the state over the past couple of years while helping them understand the importance of planting “the right tree in the right place”.

Rich Wolowicz, PSE&G’s System Forester, oversees the utility’s forestry program. He works with community leaders, arborists, and residents to ensure that trees and power lines coexist peacefully. That means taking overhead power lines into consideration when deciding where and what to plant, and trimming trees, when necessary, in a way that is healthy and aesthetically pleasing.

One example of PSE&G’s commitment to keeping New Jersey “green” is the help PSE&G foresters provide in inspecting, pruning, staking and mulching the 691 trees in the Grove of Remembrance at Liberty State Park. Their assistance over the past three years has proven invaluable in helping the New Jersey Tree Foundation maintain the living memorial.

“The time and expertise PSE&G’s foresters have provided to help Tree Foundation volunteers with tree planting and maintenance projects across the state is commendable,” said Lisa Simms, Director of the New Jersey Tree Foundation. “Their willingness to help and to educate people about tree safety has been incredibly important to our work.”

Another example is the assistance PSE&G provided earlier this year when the Asian Longhorned Beetle threatened to decimate the tree population in Middlesex County. The utility worked with state and local officials to ensure that trees near energized power lines were safely identified and removed. In Rahway, Carteret and Elizabeth, the utility offered bucket trucks and personnel to check trees near its lines, and specially trained a small group of skilled linemen to look for beetle eggs and report them to state authorities.

To help with the reforestation, PSE&G and the New Jersey Tree Foundation teamed up and donated thundercloud plum trees. The lower growing trees make good sense not only because they are impervious to the beetle, but also because they won’t grow into the utility wires above.

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PSE&G's foresters work diligently to ensure that when necessary, trees are trimmed in a way that is both acceptable to the community and good for the health of the tree. They are in constant contact with local Shade Tree Commissions and work with municipal foresters to address their concerns in advance of work the utility is planning. They also work with the Rutgers Cooperative Extension, the State Bureau of Forestry and other organizations throughout the state that are concerned with vegetation management.

"There's no doubt that trees are critical to the health of our environment and our communities. The challenge is ensuring that the right trees are planted in the right places, so that they don't interfere with our ability to keep the lights on," said Ralph LaRossa, vice president of PSE&G's electric delivery. "I'm proud of this recognition. It's an affirmation of the work our dedicated team of arborists does, each and every day. "

Media looking interested in finding out more about PSE&G's award-winning forestry program should call Jenn Connell at 973-430-7734.

The others recipients of the 2005 Green Community Achievement Awards were Fred Coniglio, Les Alpaugh, Bartlett Tree Experts and the River Edge Shade Tree Commission. The awards were framed, limited edition prints featuring the New Jersey State Champion black walnut. They were presented by Edward A. Lempicki, Chief of the New Jersey Forest Service at a ceremony in Cherry Hill.

The Green Community Achievement Awards are co-sponsored by the New Jersey Tree Foundation, the New Jersey Forest Service and the New Jersey Community Forestry Council.

Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G) is New Jersey's oldest and largest regulated gas and electric delivery utility, serving nearly three-quarters of the state's population. PSE&G again received the ReliabilityOne Award for superior electric system reliability in the Mid-Atlantic Region. PSE&G is a subsidiary of Public Service Enterprise Group Incorporated (PSEG) (NYSE:PEG), a diversified energy company (www.pseg.com).

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