

**Camden County Leads Innovative Partnership to Purchase Electricity
by Freeholder Edward T. McDonnell**

*Freeholder McDonnell is Deputy Director of the Board,
and serves as liaison to the Division of Purchasing*

Camden County has again taken the lead role in an innovative partnership to purchase retail electricity at a significant savings thanks to the group buying power and diversity of the South Jersey Power Cooperative (SJPC).

The Camden County Division of Purchasing received bid proposals on behalf of the SJPC through an online reverse auction for almost 400 facilities located throughout PSE&G and Atlantic City Electric territory. The lowest rates were submitted by Hess Corporation of Woodbridge, NJ.

Based upon their bid prices, preliminary calculations show a projected cost savings over the course of a 1-year period of approximately \$3.4 million, cumulative for all SJPC participants. The reduction in electric expenditures by Camden County alone is estimated at \$400,000.

This partnership reflects the Freeholder Board's commitment to cost cutting and fiscal responsibility. By purchasing electricity in bulk, Camden County government is continues its long-time focus on becoming leaner and more efficient, thereby saving taxpayer dollars.

Camden County has participated in bulk electric purchasing since 2004 when the SJPC was formed. In addition to Camden, the SJPC includes the Counties of Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem, along with k-12 school districts, vocational-technical schools, municipalities, utilities authorities and county colleges. In total, there are about 65 participating municipal entities.

After many consecutive years of increasingly higher energy prices, it is important for the SJPC and its members to capitalize on a market condition where retail energy prices are currently lower than default utility rates. The SJPC was able to take advantage of this opportunity to achieve about 10-20% savings in energy costs. The combined buying power of the cooperative allows all of the participants to run their operations more economically.

This is one more small win for taxpayers in difficult economic times, and is indicative of how the county works to efficiently manage its resources and expenses. We are proud that we were able to realize these savings through the work of our Camden County Division of Purchasing.