

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Addresses First International Environmental Technology Expo Environmental Protection and Economic Prosperity Go Hand in Hand

Governor Christie Whitman today kicked off the first International Environmental Technology Expo in Atlantic City. The Governor said economic development and environmental protection can be achieved together and that New Jersey has succeeded in advancing both.

The Governor said New Jersey has cleaner air, safer water and less pollution than it did 30 years ago. At the same time, Gov. Whitman said, New Jersey has more citizens, more jobs and more productivity than in the early 70's. She said economic development and environmental protection can no longer be viewed as mutually exclusive goals.

The Expo is a two-day environmental technology conference. Attendees include government officials, environmental technology vendors, developers and technology users. More than 80 exhibitors displayed their products and ideas. Workshops will address such topics as new environmental technologies, innovative ways to accomplish brownfields cleanup, technology verification and certification and electronic data exchange.

Attached are a copy of the Governor's remarks.

REMARKS OF GOVERNOR CHRISTINE TODD WHITMAN ENVIRONMENTAL EXPO '99 ATLANTIC CITY TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 1999

Thank you, Commissioner Shinn, for that introduction. Good morning. I want to join the Commissioner in welcoming you to New Jersey and to this first-of-its-kind event.

We've all heard the expression that if you build a better mousetrap, the world will beat a path to your door. There's a lot of truth to that.

You always prosper by solving problems. Volvo found success in addressing the need for safer cars. Amazon.com solved the problem of going to a book or music store that doesn't have what you want in stock. The minds who developed refrigeration revolutionized the food industry by solving the problem of keeping food fresh.

Each of the exhibits in this hall is a tribute to that problem-solving spirit. Each provides insight into the remarkable ways in which we can turn problems into opportunities. In this case, the problems are critical: pollution of our land, water,

and air; threats to open space, forests, and wildlife; and the prospect of a lower quality of life for us and our children.

In addressing such problems, our exhibitors remind us that creating a clean environment can keep your health in the pink and at the same time keep your business in the black.

It's frustrating to think that, today, nearly three decades after the first Earth Day, some people still see environmental protection and economic development as mutually exclusive goals.

I'm glad to say that, again and again, states like New Jersey prove that thinking wrong.

Over the past 30 years, my state has established high standards for the environment - among the highest in the United States.

Today, New Jersey is wealthier and more prosperous than in 1970. Today, we have more citizens, more jobs, and more productivity than in 1970. At the same time, our air is cleaner, our land less polluted, and our water safer than 30 years ago.

We have achieved both economic progress and environmental progress.

New Jersey - along with states all around the country - has learned that sustainability works. You can become more prosperous while protecting the environment that you depend upon.

There is another economic benefit. In addressing environmental problems, there is a profit to be made in designing the technology to reduce pollution or to remove hazardous materials.

In New Jersey we have seen new industries form, like the companies that decontaminate the soil we dredge from our port and sell it to be used again. And as the firms that joined me on a trade mission to South America last month can attest, there is a world of opportunities for applying these technologies abroad.

By solving environmental problems, you can rejuvenate industries that rely on natural resources. That's happened with New Jersey's shellfish industry now that more shellfish beds are thriving again. And, of course, improving waterways and beaches and air quality provides a tremendous boost to tourism, which is such a vital part of the economy.

Other good things can happen when you encourage the development of the environmental market.

As some of you may know firsthand, companies have cut their production costs by adopting new technologies and a cleaner manufacturing process. Builders are making homes less expensive to maintain by using energy-efficient, environmentally sound materials and methods. In fact, my state has a pilot program to build more affordable housing in a way that protects the environment and cuts home energy costs.

And by using new methods to clean up industrial pollution, you can turn contaminated sites into productive properties. That's good for the local economy. It will also mean you don't have to build that new enterprise on precious open space, and that's good for everyone.

The people of my state value open space. In fact, they value it so much that last fall they voted by a 2-to-1 margin to approve a plan to preserve forever 1 million more acres of open land - which is half the available land left in New Jersey.

This is an unprecedented commitment. No other state has committed as high a percentage of its land to preservation.

Making this commitment is going to help us keep our air and water clean. It will also help us deal with the problem of sprawl.

Of course, it's also going to challenge us to make the most productive use of the land we do develop. Once again, the technologies and techniques you are discussing and displaying here will be so important to meeting that challenge.

Let me close by repeating something I said a moment ago: you always prosper by solving problems. That's true whether the problem is a safety issue, a transportation challenge, or a business need.

In solving environmental problems, however, you do something even more valuable. You create a better tomorrow. You give your children and grandchildren - and the generations that will come after them - the chance to enjoy a better and healthier life.

I want to applaud the role each of you plays in creating that future.

Thank you.