

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Signs Bill Dedicating \$1.5 million for Safe Water Wells in Dover Twp.; **Teaches State History to Fourth Grade Class in Toms River**

Governor Christie Whitman today signed legislation that allocates \$1.5 million for carbon filtration systems for two wells in Dover Township. The Governor also asked the Department of Environmental Protection to continue monitoring other wells in the area to insure that they continue to provide water that is clean and safe.

The Governor signed the legislation while visiting the Washington Street School in Toms River. The Governor was at the school to teach New Jersey history to a fourth grade class, keeping a promise to volunteerism that she made during her State of the State address in January.

The legislation, A-2975, sponsored by Assemblymen James W. Holzapfel (R-Monmouth/Ocean) and David W. Wolfe (R-Monmouth/Ocean) and Senator Andrew R. Ciesla (R-Monmouth/Ocean), reallocates the more than one million dollars from the Corporate Business Tax dedicated funds.

"This new law will make \$1.5 million available to filter the water from two wells here in Dover Township," Gov. Whitman told students who witnessed the bill signing. "These new filters will take out anything that should not be in the water in the first place. And they will help ensure that all of the people in Toms River have safe, pure water."

The allocation will reimburse costs to install carbon filtration systems for two wells in Dover Township, Ocean County that were suspected of possible contamination.

For the past 4 years, the state has worked with the federal government and local community groups to study the occurrence of certain types of cancer in the area. In 1996, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) reached an agreement with United Water Management and Service and Union Carbide to turn off two of the area wells.

In 1998, Gov. Whitman signed legislation that appropriated \$100,000 for DEP to study water quality in the area basins to determine if there is a connection between water quality and the number of childhood cancer cases diagnosed in the area. Gov. Whitman first called on the legislature to provide the \$1.5 million appropriation for the carbon filtration systems in February of this year.

While visiting the school, the Governor "substitute" taught the fourth grade and then participated in a school-wide assembly.

"I made a promise to add to my commitment to volunteerism by teaching the New Jersey history and government curriculum in at least one fourth grade class every month," the Governor told a school assembly after finishing her stint in the classroom. "I have to comment on how well the class treated their substitute teacher!"

In 1998, Gov. Whitman challenged more New Jerseyans to volunteer to help their fellow citizens, and throughout the year Gov. Whitman spent time each month reading for Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic. The organization provides audio tapes of books for those with vision problems. She added teaching to her list of volunteer activities in her 1999 State of the State address.

"In my class, I spoke about how one of my favorite things about being governor is that it gives me a chance to make a real difference in people's lives. Teaching a class each month is one small way of making a difference," Gov. Whitman said. "But if I can set an example for others to follow, maybe they will volunteer - not only in schools, but in organizations and communities around New Jersey."

Gov. Whitman told the students that they, too, should strive to make New Jersey a better place to live, play, and go to school. "You don't have to be a governor to make a difference in people's lives. Each one of you can set an example for others to follow. You can work hard in school. You can be kind, tolerant, and demonstrate respect for all people," she told the students.

