



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Brick Township

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Brick Utilities Awarded State’s Highest Environmental Honor for Water Protection Program

MUA Recognized for its Leadership in Protecting Water Supply and Barnegat Bay

Brick – The Brick Township Municipal Utilities Authority (Brick Utilities) has been awarded the high honor of receiving the Governor’s Environmental Excellence Award for Water Resources. This is an award that is presented to an entity that demonstrates a positive influence in environmental conservation and water protection. The Authority is very proud to be recognized for their ongoing efforts in this regard. In particular Brick Utilities’ has implemented initiatives to protect the Metedeconk River watershed, and is working to develop the Metedeconk River Watershed Protection and Restoration Plan.

“The Metedeconk River is our primary source of water supply,” said MUA Chairman Gregory M. Flynn. “Brick Utilities’ Board of Commissioners has been committed to protecting the river for more than two decades, and it’s an honor to be recognized as a 2017 Governor’s Environmental

Excellence awardee.”

Per the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), the Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards are the state's premier environmental awards program for recognizing outstanding environmental performance, programs and projects in the state. The awards program is sponsored by NJDEP, the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust and the New Jersey Corporation for Advanced Technology, in partnership with the New Jersey League of Municipalities.

Brick Utilities led the development of the Metedeconk River Watershed Protection and Restoration Plan, which was completed in 2013 with grant funding from NJDEP. The plan was developed in close collaboration with a diverse watershed stakeholder committee, which included representatives of the watershed municipalities, Monmouth and Ocean Counties, NJDEP, Barnegat Bay Partnership, developers, environmental groups and others. The plan aims to preserve the Metedeconk River as an important water supply for the region, protect and improve the health of the Barnegat Bay estuary, and improve water quality.

“The foundation of our watershed protection work is partnership with the watershed community,” said Brick Utilities Executive Director Chris A. Theodos. “The plan and the various projects being completed to improve water quality would not be possible without this cooperation and a common goal of protecting our local water resources.”

The Watershed Plan identifies areas of the river that have become degraded as a result of human activities and outlines projects to restore these areas and improve water quality. It also documents specific measures that can be put in place to protect river water quality and flow characteristics as growth occurs in the watershed over the coming decades. Stormwater runoff is the main threat to the Metedeconk River, and the plan outlines numerous approaches to upgrade antiquated stormwater infrastructure to better filter out pollutants, prevent runoff, and allow rain water to soak into the ground.

“Stormwater picks up pollutants from roads, parking lots, lawns and other areas as it runs off and carries these pollutants to local waterways,” said Brick Utilities Commissioner and Brick Township Councilman James Fozman. “We have several projects underway that demonstrate

simple, effective ways to better manage stormwater. We look forward to seeing these improvements made in other areas to achieve a healthier river and Barnegat Bay.”

In addition to serving as an important regional water supply, the Metedeconk River is a major source of freshwater inflow to the Barnegat Bay, one of 28 Congressionally-designated estuaries of national significance that are part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s National Estuary Program.

The Metedeconk River Watershed encompasses roughly ninety (90) square miles in both Monmouth and Ocean Counties. Starting at its headwaters in Freehold, Jackson and Millstone, the river flows eastward through Howell, Lakewood, Wall and Brick Townships before reaching Point Pleasant Borough and the Barnegat Bay.

To learn more about the Metedeconk River Watershed, please visit www.metedeconkriver.org.



Brick Utilities accepting Governor’s Environmental Excellence Award at the ceremony held at the New Jersey State Museum (left to right: NJDEP Commissioner Bob Martin, Brick Utilities Chairman Gregory Flynn, Brick Utilities Executive Director Chris A. Theodos, Brick Utilities Director of Water Quality Joseph Maggio, Brick Utilities Source Water Supervisor Robert Karl, and New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust Executive Director David Zimmer)