



New Jersey Pinelands Commission **PRESS RELEASE**

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Pinelands Commission gives go-ahead on gas line application

NEW LISBON, NJ - The Pinelands Commission has issued a Certificate of Filing to South Jersey Gas Company of Folsom for an application filed by the company last year to construct a seven-mile natural gas main through portions of Camden and Burlington Counties. The Certificate of Filing formally deems the Pinelands development application as complete and authorizes South Jersey Gas to proceed with applications for local permits and any other necessary government agency approvals.

In September 2003, South Jersey Gas filed the application with the Pinelands Commission for a 12-inch-diameter, high-pressure gas main to supplement gas pressure in the Medford area. The route begins at an existing gas main at Elwood Road and 5th Street in Waterford Township and extends through Evesham Township to a supply line located at the intersection of Hopewell and Taunton Roads in Medford Township.

An earlier application, filed by South Jersey Gas in 1998, proposed to construct the line through five Pinelands management areas, including the Preservation Area District, Agricultural Production Area and Special Agricultural Production Area – three areas where development is greatly restricted to protect lands of significant ecological and agricultural value. That application was denied by the Pinelands Commission in 2000. South Jersey Gas subsequently appealed the denial, and in 2002, an Administrative Law Judge upheld the Commission's decision. The new plan re-routes the gas main away from agricultural and preservation areas to ensure compliance with Pinelands land-use standards.

"I am pleased that the Pinelands Commission and South Jersey Gas were able to work together to serve the area's important utility infrastructure needs while protecting important natural resources," said John C. Stokes, Executive Director of the Pinelands Commission. "I commend South Jersey Gas for their cooperative approach to developing a workable plan that meets Pinelands environmental and land-use standards."

Last August, prior to filing an application, a meeting was among representatives of South Jersey Gas and the Pinelands Commission to review the company's revised plans and identify any potential conflicts up front. Under the proposal, all construction will occur either in the paved portions of roadways or in the disturbed and filled portions of roadway shoulders to avoid adverse impacts on wetlands and threatened and endangered species.

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