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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 9, 2012

**Newark celebrates environmental and operational improvements
*Sen. Carper, DNREC Sec. O'Mara laud city's environmental efforts***

NEWARK, DE (April 9, 2012) – City of Newark officials were joined this morning by U.S. Senator Tom Carper and DNREC Secretary Collin O'Mara to laud a series of environmental improvements including the addition of three hybrid vehicles to the municipal fleet, purchased as part of the city's efforts to reduce air pollution and combat rising fuel costs.

"These hybrid vehicles are a smart addition to the City of Newark's fleet," said Sen. Carper (D-Del.). "Hybrids not only make good environmental sense by contributing to cleaner air and reduced dependence on fossil fuels, they also make good fiscal sense for the city's budget by reducing the amount of money needed to cover fuel costs."

"All across Delaware, local governments are taking the lead in reducing air pollution, reducing water pollution, and saving energy and money, said Secretary O'Mara. "Through simple actions like tree plantings, irrigation projects, and the adoption of hybrid vehicles, Newark is demonstrating that environmental sustainability and operational efficiency go hand-in-hand."

City officials noted that the purchase was made possible in part by a Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) program grant, administered by the DNREC Division of Energy and Climate. The grant was used to cover the additional cost of each hybrid vehicle compared to the cost of a new standard gasoline-powered model, with Newark funding the balance. The three Toyota Camry sedans were ordered following the approval of their purchase by the Mayor and City Council at a Feb. 27 city council meeting.

"I am thrilled to finally be adding hybrid cars to the City's fleet. It is something we have wanted to do for quite a while. Thankfully, this grant provided the necessary financial assistance to put us on the path towards a greener fleet," said Mayor Vance Funk. The new hybrid sedans will replace gasoline-powered vehicles used by staff in the City's Parks and Recreation and Electric departments and that were scheduled for replacement this year.

Interim City Manager Carol Houck noted that the new hybrids are expected to provide 41 mpg in combined city/highway usage, replacing vehicles that have been getting 15 mpg. "The Camry hybrid is considered by some to be one of the most fuel efficient midsize sedans currently on

the market,” Houck said, noting city officials hope to add more hybrids when budget permits. “Efforts are underway to identify additional vehicles that can be replaced with hybrids this year in an effort to further reduce the city’s fuel costs,” she said.

The City of Newark plans to use another portion of the RGGI grant for other greenhouse gas reduction projects, including a project to update the city’s gateway to downtown with an environmentally-friendly irrigation system and 18 new trees and other plantings. The City will also benefit from a second RGGI grant to the Newark Conservation Advisory Commission for an anti-idling educational campaign designed to reduce air emissions. The outreach campaign will support an existing city law which prohibits unnecessary idling of cars.

A cooperative effort between nine states including Delaware, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is the first market-based regulatory program in the United States to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. States sell nearly all emission allowances through auctions and invest proceeds in consumer benefits: energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other clean energy technologies. RGGI is spurring innovation in the clean energy economy and creating green jobs in each state. Funding for Delaware’s RGGI grant program comes from 10 percent of Delaware’s emissions auction proceeds.

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