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## **Labor, business leaders to announce coalition to promote green work force**

By Evelyn Lee

New Jersey labor unions and businesses will announce on Monday the formation of a new coalition called NJ Peel, which stands for the Partnership for Economic and Environmental Leadership. The labor and business partnership said it intends to promote green building practices to generate new jobs and substantial energy savings in the state.

“What we are doing is trying to get every sector of economy represented, and together we’ll be able to promote environmentally friendly equipment and processes,” said **Matt McDermott**, government affairs representative for the Mechanical and Allied Crafts Council in Trenton. The goal of NJ Peel, he said, is to achieve energy independence through investment in sustainable infrastructure and using the state’s existing labor force.

The New Jersey State Association of Pipe Trades, one of the coalition members, started NJ Peel two months ago to “promote the fact that the green workers are already here, and that we have retrained our workers to be able to accommodate these new systems in the plumbing and heating business,” said **Jim Kehoe**, business manager of Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 322, in Winslow.

On Monday, NJ Peel plans to unveil its Web site, which the group hopes will serve as a resource and information base on green building issues, McDermott said. Then, on May 8, the New Jersey State Association of Pipe Trades and the Mechanical and Allied Trades Council will hold a Green Mechanical Trades Day to showcase the industry’s involvement with green technologies and renewable energy sources in construction. The coalition also is planning to meet with legislators to develop policy standards on green building matters, he said.

The 14 members of NJ Peel include the New Jersey chapter of the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties, New Jersey State Association of Pipe Trades, Mechanical Contractors Association of New Jersey, PlanSmart NJ and PSE&G.