

LOCAL NEWS

SECTION B

County gets \$150G in Homeland Security funds

\$150G

Will link all municipal law enforcement agencies to central info hub

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Ocean County Prosecutor Marlene Lynch Ford announced the grant.

TOMS RIVER — State Homeland Security funding of \$150,000 awarded to Ocean County will pay for software and technical support for an information system linking all county and municipal law enforcement agencies with a state information system, Ocean County Prosecutor Marlene Lynch Ford said.

Ocean and Union counties each have been

awarded \$150,000 each to link all of the municipal law enforcement agencies to a central hub housed at each county prosecutor's office, according to a statement by Richard L. Canas, director of the state Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness.

Sharing of law enforcement agency information was a key recommendation of the federal 9/11 Commission. The county systems will link to the New Jersey Data Exchange, or NJDEX.

Connecting all the law enforcement agencies will provide "a seamless information web," that will ultimately benefit the residents, Ford said Thursday.

Ocean and Union are the sixth and seventh largest counties in the state with a combined population of 1.1 million. They are the latest counties to be awarded funding to connect to NJDEX.

Canas said that in the last year, six other counties were linked to the NJDEX

system. The information sharing will improve prevention, response and recovery efforts in every part of the state, Canas said. The Ocean County Board of Freeholders has agreed to pay the \$50,000 a year for the maintenance of the program, after receiving the initial \$150,000, Ford said.

Since 2006, Ocean County has received more than \$2.5 million in Homeland Security funding, Canas said.

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Ford said that the funding was the result of an application approved by Sept. 2 by the Ocean County freeholders board.

Gov. Jon S. Corzine acted to create the state Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness after taking office in 2006.

The agency oversees and distributes discretionary state and federal homeland security and preparedness funds on behalf of the state.

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More information about the state Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness is available online at www.njhomelandsecurity.gov.