



NEWS 12 - NEW JERSEY

## “Beach Prisms” Used to Protect Shore from Violent Storms

*By David Chang Thursday, Dec 5, 2013*

Concrete structures called “beach prisms” are being installed along the shore of one N.J. beach to help save the beach from further erosion during storms.

A Jersey Shore community hit hard by Superstorm Sandy is using a new method to protect their beach from future violent storms.

Ocean Gate is the first New Jersey town to use beach prisms. The heavy pieces of concrete, which are shaped similarly to highway barriers, act as giant brakes for waves.

“There’s a built-in parabolic curve right here and when the wave hits that parabolic curve it scatters away as spray,” said Jay McKenna, the Beach Prisms regional sales manager.

Thirty-five of the beach prisms, which are precast with triangular openings, will be placed inside the Toms River in Ocean Gate. Once nearly submerged in the water, about 50 feet from the sand, the prisms are designed to prevent beach erosion when waves kick up during coastal storms.

“In the vast majority of instances it will not only completely restore your beach, but also increase the amount of sand on your beach,” McKenna said.

While plans for the prisms have been in development for three years, Ocean Gate Mayor Paul Kennedy said the devices are especially important now since the community just replaced its boardwalk after Sandy destroyed the old one last year.

“We’ve been losing beach year after year with the Nor’easters we get,” he said. “So we came up with an idea that hopefully will work.”



The Virginia-based company that makes the prisms installed them along the Chesapeake Bay and in other areas. Officials say they cost less and are more durable than other shore protection methods that use stones and other materials.

“The prisms seemed to be the best way because it was inexpensive,” Kennedy said.

Believing that other Jersey Shore towns would be interested in using the prisms, Kennedy convinced the company’s sales rep to attend last month’s State League of Municipalities Conference in Atlantic City.

“We were inundated with mayors questioning us,” McKenna said. “We hope to do much more business in New Jersey.”