

# Kearny



## How Sweet it is!

International dessert maker relocates to the KUEZ

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# In the Zone: 25 Years and Counting

**Soon after its designation in 1985 as a state Urban Enterprise Zone, Kearny set out to sign on local companies so they could reap UEZ benefits and gain a competitive advantage. Now, three Kearny firms are celebrating their 25th anniversary in the zone.**

Alan Lambiase remembers what South Kearny was like before the town was designated by the state as an Urban Enterprise Zone. Industry had been leaving the area and no coordinated effort existed to recruit new businesses to replace them.

A decade earlier his firm, River Terminal Development, had begun purchasing properties from corporations such as Western Electric, Westinghouse, Mack Truck and A&P Stores, leading firms that were leaving the area in droves.

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Senior Vice President, Spectraserv

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Today South Kearny’s economic climate has done a complete 180, and even during the current downturn the town continues to improve infrastructure and market the area to potential new tenants.

Through the years, River Terminal has assembled a 300-acre industrial park with 5.5 million square feet of prime warehouse and distribution facilities. National

and international firms lease the space for its proximity to the New York metropolitan area, easy access to major roadways and Kearny’s designation as a UEZ, which translates into 0% sales tax on the purchases of capital improvement materials and equipment.

Lambiase credits the KUEZ with providing South Kearny businesses with the tools they need to continue to grow.

“The KUEZ has directly invested over \$7 million towards ‘brick and mortar’ capital improvements in the Kearny Industrial Area,” stated Lambiase. “Through the UEZ program funds, the town has paved roads, separated sanitary and storm water lines, installed security cameras and funded public safety programs.”

Over the past quarter century, the KUEZ has emerged as an economic engine that has powered job growth and corporate expansion in South Kearny, as well as in the uplands portion of town. In all, the program has created more than 3,800 full-time jobs and has brought \$28 million in local funding to Kearny for projects like the ongoing reconstruction of the Sellers Street area in South Kearny, a roadway that is critical to attracting more businesses to the area.

One of the first firms to join the KUEZ 25 years ago was TES, Inc., a leading provider of heavy equipment including forklifts, cranes, trailers and truck accessories for the material handling and equipment industry.

Another was Spectraserv, a pollution control company that has operated in South Kearny since 1969.



Approximately 25% of Spectraserv's employees reside in Kearny, with another 25% hailing from nearby communities. That stable workforce has been a boon, both to the company and to employees, who don't have to travel far to work.

"Our workforce has remained relatively stable through the years," explained Frank Senske, senior vice president of Spectraserv. "It helps to have that local connection. Our workers are a part of the community. They're close by and can respond to our clients on short notice."

Spectraserv draws more than 95% of its clients from the ranks of government agencies, municipalities and authorities, who turn to the company for a wide range of services including wastewater and residuals treatment; transportation, processing, disposal and reuse of waste materials; construction and installation of treatment systems; and tank, lagoon and pond cleaning.

Senske points to his firm's membership in the

KUEZ as a key driver of success, adding that benefits can be tailored to the needs of different industries.

"Through the tax advantages utilized, we've been able to be more competitive with our clients and maintain a high level of service," Senske said. "You just have to work with the KUEZ to identify which benefits are appropriate for your particular line of business. I don't think there's any question that it's a positive to be part of the KUEZ."

Lambiase concluded that the KUEZ's involvement has benefited business owners, employees and Kearny citizens.

Over the years, the Kearny UEZ program was one of the most efficiently run programs in the state," Lambiase said. "Its improvements have helped create jobs, add ratables to the tax base and address quality-of-life issues on the peninsula."