

**Michael Ryan Elected Chairman of Grow Smart Rhode Island,
Succeeding Grow Smart Founder James Dodge**

PROVIDENCE, RI (October 24, 2002): Michael F. Ryan, executive vice president of Narragansett Electric Company, has been elected Chairman of Grow Smart Rhode Island, succeeding Grow Smart founder, James H. Dodge. Dodge has chaired the organization from its inception in 1998, and will remain a member of the Grow Smart board and a key advisor to the organization. Grow Smart Rhode Island is a non-profit policy organization, serving as a statewide voice for more than 50 groups in Rhode Island fighting suburban sprawl and urban decay.

In assuming the Grow Smart chairmanship, Ryan noted, "I'm proud to be leading Grow Smart at a time when an increasing number of political and community leaders are realizing that our state's economic, social and environmental well-being is dependent on strengthening our urban and town centers and protecting our distinctive quality of life". Ryan added, "For several years, Grow Smart Rhode Island has been a leader in the effort to achieve these objectives through promotion of such initiatives as a State Building Rehab Code, a Commercial Historic Tax Credit, new funding for open space preservation, a new land use training program for municipal officials and establishment of the Governor's Growth Planning Council."

Ryan praised outgoing Grow Smart Board Chairman, Jim Dodge for "his vision, integrity and persistence in building a broad based coalition to maximize Rhode Island's economic potential while protecting its special places."

Ryan indicated that in conjunction with Executive Director Scott Wolf, he will focus Grow Smart on achieving financial incentives for Brownfields redevelopment, reforms in Rhode Island's approach to economic development and taxation, a more targeted State investment strategy emphasizing designated growth centers and further strengthening of local officials' growth management capacity. Noting the upcoming transition in state government, Ryan concluded, "It will be most important to forge a strong alliance with the new governor and General Assembly in pursuit of sound economic development and growth management policies for Rhode Island. I'm firmly convinced that Rhode Island sells itself on quality of life, not quantity of asphalt." "Our newfound economic momentum and self-esteem is a result of increasing recognition of that fact, Ryan added." "We can control our destiny and grow by choice, not by chance. This is what I'm committed to as the new chairman of Grow Smart Rhode Island."

Ryan joined Narragansett Electric Company in December of 1994, and since May of 2000 has been its executive vice president. Prior to joining Narragansett Electric, Ryan served for eight years as the Rhode Island director of the offices of United States Senator John H. Chafee, (1986 to 1994). Earlier in his career, Ryan was public relations manager for AT&T Communications, (1984 to 1986), and a special assistant and press secretary to Governor J. Joseph Garrahy from (1977 to 1984).

In addition to his Grow Smart Board Chairmanship, Ryan serves on numerous civic and community boards. He is a member of the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education, and is also a board member of the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Providence Foundation, Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council, Professional Facilities Management, Trudeau Memorial Center, and Business Education Roundtable. A Rhode Island College graduate, Ryan and his family reside in Warwick, Rhode Island.

