# Water Rates to Increase 12.5 Percent for Area Consumers

AREA – The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) approved an agreement on March 22 between the Rate Counsel, the BPU and New Jersey American Water Co. that will result in customer bills rising 12.5 percent.

N.J. Rate Counsel Seema Singh said, "New Jersey Rate Counsel does not like any increases in rates for consumers. However, we fought as hard as we could to negotiate the best agreement possible given the company's needs for capital improvements of their infrastructure. The settlement agreement that was entered into by Rate Counsel, the Board of Public Utilities staff and New Jersey American Water Co. was for a 12.5 percent increase in revenues, which is 10 percent less than the company's original request for a 22.3 percent increase, and we were able to negotiate a lower rate of return on the company's investment.

"In addition, we were able to achieve several other components that are beneficial to ratepayers, including a ban on rate increases through 2008. New Jersey American Water Co. recently merged with two companies (the former Mount Holly Water Company and the former Elizabethtown Water Co.). The last rate increase request received by each of the newly merged companies was in 2004." Ms. Singh announced her resignation, effective April 6, a day after she annnounced the rate hike.

Rates become effective March 30. Rates for a typical residential customer using 7,000 gallons per month for the former New Jersey American Water Company service territory shall increase by $5.29 per month, rates for the former Elizabethtown Water Company service territory will increase by $5.27 per month and for the former Mount Holly Water Company service territory will rise $5.03 per month.

The monthly customer charge for the former New Jersey American Water Co. service territory will be set at $8.50 per month and the service charge for the former Elizabethtown and Mount Holly Water Co. service territories will be set at $7.50 per month.

# Stender Attends Enviro. Rally in Washington, D.C.

SCOTCH PLAINS –Assemblywoman Linda Stender (LD-22) of Fanwood traveled to Washington, DC last week for a rally to urge members of Congress to pass legislation calling for the reduction of green house gas emissions. She spoke to environmental groups and concerned citizens from 45 states on the West Front Lawn of the U.S. Capitol Building about New Jersey's efforts to combat global warming and its impact on worldwide climate change.

"I'm proud to say New Jersey residents are among the first to confront the issue of global warming head-on," said Ms. Stender (D). "We are here in Washington today to deliver New Jersey's message to our leaders in Congress: The time to act is now, and the world can't wait for those who lag behind."

She noted that climate experts have found that the earth's temperature has begun to rise rapidly and that the change is linked to the use of fossil fuels. Further, she says that ice sheets, glaciers, and frozen tundra are already beginning to melt and that if unchecked, this trend will cause a rise in sea levels that could wipe out New Jersey's vulnerable coastline.

"Scientists are telling us that we can avoid the worst effects of global warming, if we cut our use of fossil fuels," said Ms. Stender. "We have the technology and the willpower to get that done. What we need now is leadership from Washington."

Climate Crisis Action Day was organized to bring attention to climate change in the 1.5-million-acre coastal plain section of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. Temperatures at the earth's poles are increasing faster than the global average, and Alaska is already feeling the effects, Ms. Stender said.

"If all we do is sit on our hands, we can look to Alaska to predict New Jersey's future," said Ms. Stender. "Wetlands and ponds are drying out, invasive species and new diseases are moving in, forest fires and insect populations are on the rise, and they are facing the loss of entire coastal areas. In the private sector, installations of solar panels are starting to take off," she explained. "We're second only to California in that area. We also need a statewide framework for action, and that is the goal of the Global Warming Response Act I am currently sponsoring in the New Jersey Legislature."

According to Asw. Stender, New Jersey is an original signer of the Northeast States' Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and over 33 New Jersey municipalities have signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. She said New Jersey electricity customers can order emission-free power through the Clean Power Choice program administered by the Board of Public Utilities (BPU).

For more information on clean energy programs in New Jersey, contact the board of public utilities at www.njcleanenergy.com or call the office of Asw. Linda Stender at (908) 668-1900.

Horace R. Corbin for *The Westfield Leader*

**GOOD FELLOWS (from archives April 14, 2005)…The Westfield Jaycees hold their annual alumni banquet at the Jolly Trolley restaurant in Westfield. The event spirited a record turnout. This year, the event will be held on WednesdayApril 11.**

# Westfield Jaycees Set Old-Timer's Night for April 11

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Jaycees will hold their annual Westfield Jaycee reunion, dubbed "Old-Timer's Night," on Wednesday, April 11 at 7 p.m. at the Jolly Trolley on North Avenue in Westfield. All past, present and potential Jaycees are invited to attend. Dinner and refreshments will be provided to new guests at no charge.

Also, the Jaycees will be conducting a 9/11 Memorial Clean Up on Saturday, April 14 beginning at 9 a.m. at the 9/11 Memorial in Westfield. Volunteers are sought to join in to honor and maintain the memorial. Please bring gloves and rakes.

The Westfield Jaycees is a group of individuals volunteering their time toward the betterment of the community, with a particular focus on the future of the youth. The Jaycees are responsible for, or contribute to, a number of local projects such as the Westfield Child Shield Program. The Jaycees serve the community by donating time and money to the overall improvement of the Westfield area.

The Jaycees hold monthly membership meetings the first Wednesday of each month at a local restaurant. For more information regarding this or any other matter of the Westfield Jaycees, call (908) 490-1180 or e-mail info@westfieldjaycees.com or see westfieldjaycees.com.

## County to Hold Mobile Shredding Event

PLAINFIELD — Freeholder Chairwoman Bette Jane Kowalski has announced that Union County will unveil the mobile shredding truck this Saturday, March 31, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the "Unite to Recycle" event at the Rock Avenue Transfer Station in Plainfield.

Residents can bring their confidential documents and other recyclable paper items for shredding. The service is free for all residents, with a 100-pound limit per resident.

The shredding truck is being paid for through a grant. It will make various stops at soon to be scheduled events throughout the county this year. The shredding program is aimed at assisting residents most vulnerable to identity theft. Additional programs may be run on weekends at municipal recycling centers.

# Friends of Mindowaskin Set Park Cleanup for April 28

WESTFIELD – A spring cleanup is scheduled for Mindowaskin Park on Saturday, April 28 from 9 a.m. to noon, rain or shine. Volunteers and organizations are sought to participate and to bring gloves, weeding tools and rakes.

Volunteers will meet behind the footbridge, closest to the Presbyterian Church parking lot. For more information, call (908) 233-0028 or e-mail mindowaskin@comcast.net.

The Friends of Mindowaskin Park (FOMP) is a non-profit organization founded in the early 1990's to revitalize the park. The mission of the group is to ensure the long-term enjoyment of the public park together with the Town of Westfield. The independent group works in cooperation with the town to protect the historical significance and to help maintain the park. The park has been designated an historic site and FOMP has raised over $500,000 through the years to improve the park. Tax-deductible donations are sought.

Mindowaskin Park will celebrate its 90th anniversary in 2008. FOMP in 2006 donated $76,000 to help restore the bandstand. Their total donation for 2006 was $113,000. During 2007 and 2008 a memory walk will be installed at the bandstand. To be included, please contact FOMP.

In 2002, FOMP donated over $100,000 to help restore the overlook on East Broad Street to 1930 plans.

FOMP board members include: Debby Burslem, Diane Cesarz, Rose Clemson, Sherry Cronin, Richard Edge, David Foltz, Fontaine Gatti, B. Carol Molnar, Nancy Priest, Marilyn Shields, Craig Stock, Barbara Vincentsen and David Williams.

## Novak to Speak at WF Recr. April 5 Sr. Social

WESTFIELD — Jamie Novak will share tips and techniques for all areas including paper, storage, kitchen, photos, closets, drawers, basement, attic, recipes, receipts, magazine and newspaper clippings at a Thursday, April 5 program sponsored by the Westfield Recreation Department.

Ms. Novak is the resident organizer for NBC's iVillage and has been a featured organizer on HGTV's Mission Organization with a best- selling book "1,000 Quick and Easy Organizing Secrets." Her tips have been featured nationally in *Woman's World* and *Family Circle*.

Pre-registration is mandatory and coffee and dessert will be served. The program will be offered at the Westfield Municipal Building community room, located at 425 East Broad Street, from 1 to 2 p.m. The community room entrance is located on East Broad Street. The fee for the program is $8. To obtain a program registration form, visit westfieldnj.gov/recreation or call the Westfield Recreation Department at (908) 789-4080.


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