

# Dear Residents of Westfield

As you may know, the Westfield Board of Education has been discussing, and recently approved for public vote on September 24, the issuance of bonds to fund roof replacements and to install a multi-purpose artificial turf field. Approximately 85 percent of our aging existing roofs would be replaced, with some work done at each of our 12 buildings. The artificial turf field would be installed at Westfield High School, which would benefit every student at WHS, as well as benefit the increased number of students and children throughout our town. All of the Board discussions on these projects are available for viewing at your convenience at [www.westfieldnj12.org](http://www.westfieldnj12.org).

Some residents have subsequently raised questions about these projects and in a few cases, it is apparent that information circulating in the community was either misreported or misunderstood as originally communicated. The purpose of this letter is to help clarify the information and respond to these inquiries.

**Roofs:** You may recall that starting about two years ago we embarked on a project to put solar on our roofs. Through many meetings with solar developers and after being considered for a broader Union County solar initiative, we learned that no solar developer would undertake a meaningful solar project because too much underlying roof repair was necessary to ensure that the roofs would last for the entire life of the solar project. The average age of the majority of our roofs is over 20 years old. The "patch as you go" approach is no longer sustainable. We would spend too much money each year just trying to keep up and to replace only a small portion of the roofs in any one year. That approach quickly becomes extremely uneconomical and inefficient.

**How did we get into such a position?**

1. About ten years ago the state took away our ability to save more than 2 percent in our reserve fund balance.
2. Three years ago the state decreased our state aid by 96 percent.
3. Two years ago the state placed a 2 percent cap on all school district budgets.

As a result, we do not have the ability to save for large capital improvement projects. There is no scenario that will allow us to fund our current roofing needs without a bond issuance. We do have a five-year facilities plan and we have been able to make headway with replacement of boilers, windows, lockers and other projects. We cannot fund new roofs through our operating budget without making substantial cuts to all the valuable programs and people who help bring success to our Westfield students and continue to attract new families to our town.

**Lighted Turf Field:** Do we really "need" a turf field at Westfield High School? It would be a struggle to suggest that the District can't survive without one. But we are not measuring "need" by whether we can get by without one. We are measuring "need" based on, among other things, field usage, safety, current field conditions, and the projected number of students to be playing on our fields in the future. Additionally, we asked a simple question: Do we want to increase capacity to allow more of our children to spend more time outdoors undertaking physical activity through gym classes and organized sports? As you know from our vote on the turf field, the answer is a resounding YES. We believe that it is important to increase field usage capacity during periods of poor weather and during non-daylight hours for these purposes. The Board of Education believes it is important to provide as much opportunity as possible for all of our students to participate in our outdoor athletic programs (in this case, WHS gym classes and programs) as well as in organized sports (if you have the time to review the Board presentations on this topic at [www.westfieldnj12.org](http://www.westfieldnj12.org), the growth in programs over the years will be obvious). Currently, Westfield has only one turf field that is regulation size for most sports (Kehler). A town like Chatham, which is smaller in population than Westfield, has four regulation size turf fields.

We have been asked to make the leagues pay for the turf field, or simply to impose a user fee on those using the fields. While we could ask the leagues to contribute, or impose such a fee, there is no way we would collect enough to put down a turf field. When we have asked for help from the leagues in the past, they have been there. But these have been requests in the thousands of dollars, not in amounts that we could rely on to build and maintain a project of this scale. The improved safety and availability of playing time on the turf field will benefit every student in physical education classes at Westfield High School as well as the student athletes who work hard to bring home both county and state championships, and the growing number of younger children in feeder programs throughout the town. We know there are many in town whose kids have moved on. They don't feel the need to fund a field for today's children

and that makes some sense. As a Board we believe that everyone benefits when we build a stronger school district. This may be directly, as you watch your own kids go through the system, or, for those whose children have all moved on, it may be indirectly, as you continue to live in an attractive town that takes pride in what we have to offer.

We also have heard that a turf field will complicate traffic conditions and cause lighting concerns for residents close to the field. We are sensitive to these issues. We will be mindful of the scheduling of events and will work to utilize our increased parking facilities to handle parking flow. That is not an easy undertaking and we know that we will need to continue to partner with the Army and Town to ensure multiple large-scale events do not occur at one time, and to safely direct traffic if individual large events do occur. We do not believe that the addition of a turf field will cause additional traffic complications during routine use of the field as compared to the field's current usage. If there appears to be a problem, we can adjust and monitor as necessary.

The lighting also is a concern to the Board. We anticipate using the same system in place at Houlihan/Sid Fey which is a system designed to minimize the spillage effect of the lights. We will work hard to place the lights in such positions as to minimize the spillage. There is no doubt that it will look different at the high school after dark when the field is in use. We will work hard to ensure that any disruption caused by that will be minimal. We also have been asked to build the turf field at Westfield High School, but to put the lights on Kehler. We are creating a regulation size multi-purpose field at Westfield High School to add maximum capacity to the District for our sports programs. It makes sense to light the newer facility, which will also accommodate more sports, such as softball.

Many ancillary issues regarding the turf field also have been raised. These include the fact that turf fields become excessively hot on sunny days. Our architect and athletic supervisor are investigating the latest surface, which is less apt to cause concern. We are reviewing the information that we have received on this topic and would never proceed with any project (turf field or otherwise) if our experts were to advise that the project is detrimental to student health. It also has been brought to our attention that children use the high school field hill to sled in the winter and to play in a natural environment. We agree with the importance of such uses, but on balance do not believe that such uses would outweigh the benefits of a turf field at the high school.

**Bond Format:** People have suggested that they will vote "no" to a bond issuance in all different scenarios - If the bond only includes roofs; if the bond only includes a turf field; if the roofs and field are linked as one vote; etc. The recommendation of the Facilities Committee is to combine the vote on both of these projects into one vote, as has been done on prior issuances that contained multiple projects, because both projects are important to the integrity and safety of our facilities - both indoor and out. The Board will decide on the exact wording of the bond referendum proposal during one of its June meetings and most likely on June 5.

**Timing:** Our bond referendum is in September. We discussed having it in November to sync up with the existing election schedule. But more important than the election schedule, we want the roof work to be done next summer, when school is not in session. The roofs won't get done in time if we wait to start the process until after the November elections. If the turf field is approved, we are hopeful that the work can be completed in time for the 2013-2014 school year.

**Cost:** To provide for both the roof replacement and turf field, the allocated annual cost of the bond to the average assessed home in Westfield will be \$108. There would be no impact in the 2012-2013 school year due to the timing of the issuance. Taking the retirement of prior bond issuances into account, however, your tax bill for the 2013-2014 school year would go up \$45, not \$108. That annual net impact amount will vary over the next 20 years (the life of the bond) from a high of \$55 to a low of a decrease of \$157. The exact schedule was shown in a prior Board presentation and can be viewed on our website. Some have pointed out that \$45 a year equates to about 12 cents a day and therefore, we should move this forward. Others have pointed out that \$45 a year is \$45 a year, and in fact, wouldn't it be nice if our taxes did not have to increase at all? Both points of view are equally valid and fully understood by the Board of Education. Bond interest rates are also at historic lows. Taking advantage of the current interest rate environment also helps to minimize the cost impact of the projects.

It also has been suggested that we should instead issue bonds for more computers, librarians, and teachers. Personnel costs fall squarely within our

annual operating budget and we cannot rely on future bond issuances to maintain our personnel or programs. Computers and similar assets have much more limited lives (requiring faster repayment) than the larger capital improvement projects that are typically bonded. In addition, we view such assets as more normal course purchases that must be sustained from the ongoing operating budget rather than from a bond issuance.

The Board of Education hopes this letter will clarify the community's understanding of the need and funding for school building roof replacements and repairs and a lighted turf field to benefit all high school physical education students and student athletes throughout Westfield. The Westfield community has a strong tradition of supporting education and our public schools. The Board of Education is now asking the community to continue that support by endorsing these projects in a referendum vote on Monday, September 24.

We look forward to continued communications with you on these projects in the future. We can be contacted at [wboe@westfieldnj12.org](mailto:wboe@westfieldnj12.org).

By The Westfield Board of Education:  
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## County Begins New Scrap Metal Recycling Program

COUNTY - The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders has announced the start of a new program that enables county residents to recycle scrap metal free of charge. A wide variety of metal goods, from household appliances to gutters and sheds, are included in the program.

The Scrap Metal Recycling Program is available for use by households, commercial establishments, nonprofit agencies and other organizations.

Starting on Thursday, June 7, the program will be open on the first Thursday of each month and the third Saturday of each month, from 9 a.m. to noon.

Scrap metal from any Union County municipality may be brought to any of the following four drop-off centers: Oak Ridge Park, 36 Oak Ridge Road (the Oak Ridge Service Yard) in Clark; Watchung Reservation, Tracy Drive (the Loop parking area) in Mountainside; Rahway Park, Rahway Service Yard (across from the pool) in Rahway, and at the Westfield Conservation Center, 1300 Lamberts Mill Road, in Westfield.

County residents who are recycling refrigerators or freezers must remove the doors as is required by law. Refrigerators or freezers with the doors intact will not be accepted. Acceptable items include: aluminum scrap, aluminum cans, brass, copper, dishwashers, gutters, microwaves, refrigerators and freezers with doors removed, stoves, clothes washers and dryers, air conditioners, metal cabinets, metal chain or wire fencing, clothes irons, railings, metal sheds, tire rims (with tires removed), metal window frames (with glass removed), bicycles, metal lawn furni-

ture, rebar, aluminum siding, toasters, and wire hangers.

The Scrap Metal Recycling Program will be available every month of the year; however, in the event of extreme bad weather individual events may be cancelled.

To get more details online about the scrap metal program and other Union County recycling programs, visit [ucnj.org/recycling](http://ucnj.org/recycling). For information by phone, including weather-related cancellations, call the Union County Recycling Hotline at (908) 654-9889.

## UC Bus. Breakfast Set for June 6 in Eliz.

COUNTY - The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders encourage local business owners and managers to attend the fourth session of the Union County Means Business free networking breakfast series on Wednesday, June 6, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the Union County College Kellogg Building in midtown Elizabeth. The topic of this session is "Your Workforce: Incentives, Training and Resources to Develop Current Employees and Find Qualified Employees."

The breakfast series is designed to help owners and managers get firsthand information about issues, programs and resources that affect their businesses. It features expert speakers and local representatives addressing a variety of topics including financing, new media, public/private partnerships and other emerging opportunities. All sessions are free, but pre-registration is required. To register and to get more details about the June 6 session visit [ucnj.org/UCMeansBusiness](http://ucnj.org/UCMeansBusiness) or call (908) 527-4200.

## "Doctor, my back, legs and feet hurt so badly that I can't live like this."

Local Doctor in New Jersey offers latest non-invasive, painless treatment

Dear friend,

Y j gp'c'r gtup'j cu'p'gw'qr cj' { 'hp'd'qj' 'hgi' u'q'w' 'h'ng'ecp'dg'1 ngr' with a great deal of pain. Not just muscle pain but nerve and brain pain. Whether you have poorly controlled diabetes, spinal stenosis or chemical damage from cholesterol or cancer drugs you might feel like you are at the end of your rope.

**These patients changed my life forever.**

I routinely see patients who feel like their legs are being eaten on by little animals. Or that they cannot relax their legs at all, can't sleep or get comfortable, with severe pain down the legs to the toes. After learning how to help these patients I realized that the joy of my job is creating peace in people's lives.

A great deal of the patients I take care of experience severe pain like electric or stabbing all the time, disturbed sleeping patterns, Restless Leg Syndrome, fatigue, depression, numbness and tingling in the toes, pain in the legs when they walk, wounds and leg ulcers that do not heal. These, my friend, are a lot of symptoms. That's why I've established a "Peripheral Neuropathy Pain Treatment Program" for anyone who is suffering. When these health situations are resolved, it's not just improvement in quality of life, it's really peace.

Peripheral Neuropathy is often misdiagnosed, or not diagnosed at all. But, it affects the lives of between 10 and 20 million Americans. This problem can cause:

- Numbness.
- Burning pain.
- Cramping.
- Sharp, electric pain.
- Hurt when you walk.
- Difficulty sleeping from leg/foot discomfort.
- Prickling/tingling feelings.

Often, these good people have been frustrated by the traditional care they've received for these terrible problems, and are still seeking help.

**Have You Been Told To Try Or HAVE Tried...**

- Medication
- Painful injections
- Physical therapy
- Acupuncture
- Vitamins
- Or maybe you have been told, **JUST LIVE WITH IT!**

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When you call and make an appointment, I'll perform a highly-specialized Qualitative Clinical Scoring System of the Peripheral Nervous System to see if we may be able to help. If I don't think I can help I will truthfully tell you and steer you in the right direction so that you can get the appropriate care you need. But, please [www.cen'f'k'j'v'ey'c'\('d'g'ecw'g'y'g'ecp'c'ng'q'p'r' 'j'g'1' tuw'34'ecngtu'0'18](http://www.cen'f'k'j'v'ey'c'('d'g'ecw'g'y'g'ecp'c'ng'q'p'r' 'j'g'1' tuw'34'ecngtu'0'18) you are one of these 12. I'll do this Evaluation and Qualifying Process Completely FREE!! (\$225 Value). This offer expires May 31, 2012, so call soon!

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**Here's what some of your neighbors have to say:**

**"It is such a relief that I can sleep at night!"**

*I saw the article in the Star Ledger and said, "why not give it a try either it will or will not work." I was diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy in my feet. I was told there was nothing that could be done just medication. I was trying to live with it. It is such a relief that I can sleep at night. There were times I could not fall asleep for days. I felt relief by the second week. I am looking forward to working again and not having any pain to stop me. Dr. Chludzinski and the staff are wonderful, very friendly, and put you at ease. I would recommend others to go to the Hudson Center for Spinal Care. The treatments really do work. Thanks.*

Kathleen McGinn, Homecare

**"I highly recommend this office to change your life and get your feeling good again."**

*I have endured chronic severe pain over three years. The damage caused by compartment syndrome in my legs has changed my life dramatically. I have tried many possible treatments but, nothing has helped me as much as the laser therapy and chiropractic care I have received from this fantastic, professional doctor and his staff. My back has suffered over 13 years from a degenerative disc and injured from a bad fall down the stairs. In just over a month's time, I am smiling and feeling much better. I highly recommend this office to change your life and get your feeling good again.*

Janice Mezzacappa, Trainer

Not For Everyone. While this technology is certainly not for everyone and may not be helpful for your type of problem, there is also a tremendous possibility that it is a life-saving solution you have been hoping and praying for - the solution that could give you your life back.

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