

# PMUA NEWS

Fall 2009

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER...

This newsletter is published quarterly to provide Plainfield residents with news and information about the PMUA, its solid waste and sanitary sewer services. For questions or comments regarding our newsletter, contact PMUA Public Information at: (908) 226-2518 or reachpmua@pmua.org

PLAINFIELD MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY

*Celebrating over a Decade of Service to Plainfield*

The Focus

Talkin' Shop

The Well

Everything you need to know about keeping it clean in the City of Plainfield.

## 2009 ENVIRONMENTAL FAIR



A truly special day for the PMUA, Saturday September 12th, 2009 we proudly hosted our 10th Annual Environmental Fair at Library Park in Plainfield.

The day was filled with laughter, education, music and activity all centered around this year's fair theme "Conserve & Save". Marking a decade for our milestone community event, the theme for the day focused on a topic that has become a forefront in our thinking; to improve our quality of life through recycling and conservation efforts.

Celebrating unity and community fellowship, Library Park came alive. Featuring face painting, children's attractions, rides and activities the youth of Plainfield had a wonderful time while watching their peers compete in step competitions, choir performances, and listening to the Plainfield High School Band.

With carnival snacks and a barbeque provided, residents walked around to resource vendor tables gathering information about the environment and the Plainfield community. At the same time,

people enjoyed listening to a live salsa band and DJ music. During the opening ceremonies, the youth of our City were recognized for their efforts in the PMUA Annual School Essay/Poster and Summer Camp Art Contests. We were also privileged to have City, County and State dignitaries attend this wonderful event.

PMUA would like to thank all of the people and organizations who took part in making the 2009 Environmental Fair a most memorable day. Working together to save our environment, the PMUA continues to provide services that keep Plainfield safe and clean.

### **Introducing the new PMUA WEBSITE: [www.pmua.info](http://www.pmua.info)**

Please see [www.pmua.info](http://www.pmua.info) to get all of the latest information from the PMUA. Including collection schedules, residential solid waste protocols, recycle procedures, PMUA services, important dates, announcements, community outreach efforts and much more can be viewed on the new PMUA Website. Be sure to view our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) section of the PMUA Website. Go to [www.pmua.info](http://www.pmua.info) and view answers to frequent customer questions and inquiries.



## CAROL ANN BROKAW CHAIRPERSON OF PMUA

During the last few months, there has been some misinformation published about the PMUA. At the Authority, we pride ourselves on providing quality services to the community, and appreciate constructive criticism and earnest suggestions for improvement. In an effort to clarify any misconceptions about the PMUA, I offer the following information:

First, let's talk about expenses. Our bond debt service is \$1.9 million per year, and is 9% of our annual budget. The bond debt service is the interest and repayment of monies borrowed for infrastructure improvement and updates for essential equipment. We have ancient and fragile sewer lines. The bulk of this money is for the improvement of the transfer station and the sewer system, both of which are operated and maintained by the PMUA but are owned by the City.

Each year, PMUA pays the City for lease of the sewer system. This year's payment to the City was \$1.6 million which is 7% of our 2009 budget. Per the PMUA's Interlocal Agreement with the City, the PMUA's payment to the City increases annually based on increases in the Consumer Price Index and Producer Price Index (6.5% in 2009) while the City's payment to the PMUA to offset the total annual cost of disposal for all solid waste generated within the geographic boundaries of the City is a fixed payment of 1.2 million per year, with no provision for increases despite the substantial increases in the cost of waste disposal.

Every year, we make scheduled payments to Plainfield Regional Sewer Authority (PARSA), and the Union County Utilities Authority (UCUA) and for the processing of sewage and the disposal of solid waste respectively. These costs for 2009 are approximately \$4.8 million, and represent 22% of our budget. Over the past three years, these payments have increased at an average of 5% each year.

We cannot keep the City clean without employees, and costs associated with human resources totaling \$6.4 million this year and represents 29% of the budget. We are very proud that 85% of our employees live in the City of Plainfield. Moreover, we are proud that the Executive staff of PMUA saw the community benefit of having an employment re-entry program, long before it became fashionable. Benefits (e.g. health and dental, social security, FICA, Medicare, pension contributions and worker's compensation) for our staff represents 14% of the budget, and this year totals \$2.9 million.

All of these categories of expenses add up to \$17.5 million or 80% of our budget, leaving approximately another \$4.5 million to cover such expenses as fuel for our trucks (approximately \$300,000), operating insurance (approximately \$400,000), infrastructure improvements (approximately \$475,000), operating reserves (approximately \$8,000,000), vehicle and equipment repairs and vehicle and equipment repairs (approximately \$500,000) and garbage truck leases (approximately \$265,000).

Against this economic reality, some of the economic challenges of this City have a direct impact on our fiscal viability. As of August 31, 2009, the City has 750 foreclosed properties. Several of the Connolly properties are now in bankruptcy. Although the U.S. Bankruptcy judge has ordered that the approximately \$358,000 owed to the Authority by certain Connolly properties at the time of filing is deemed a high priority claim under Chapter 11, the Authority may recoup all, some or possibly none of this claim. In addition, subsequent to the filing approximately \$92,000 remains unpaid from Connolly properties currently in bankruptcy. The Authority provides approximately \$320,000 of service to Connolly for the properties currently in bankruptcy on an annual basis. Moreover, other rental properties in Plainfield, some of which are also Connolly properties not in bankruptcy, are also in ar-

rears for their PMUA payments. Some of you may argue that PMUA should not be servicing high density buildings and thereby would not be impacted by rental property delinquencies. However, even if the properties in question had a private hauler, such a hauler would have discontinued service once it stopped being paid, but the garbage at these buildings would continue piling up, presenting a health hazard to the City residents. The City would have been forced to pick up the garbage, which would then be delivered to the transfer station, which PMUA operates. As you can see, under any scenario high density landlords who fail to pay for garbage disposal have an impact on PMUA's bottom line.

Another recent impact on our bottom line that can be directly linked to the recent rate increases was the loss of full health services at Muhlenberg Hospital. The loss of these services was detrimental to the community, the most important of which was the loss of jobs for many Plainfield residents. While rate payers lost jobs, PMUA will lose approximately \$360,000 in yearly revenue for sewer services in future years.

Finally, I want to end this piece with correcting some recent misinformation about PMUA's annual Environmental Fair, at which we honor the intelligence and creativity of our youth by awarding them with prizes for their outstanding writing and artistic achievements. We are fortunate to have the support of the community for this fair; The cost of which is underwritten by outside vendors and utilizes environmental grants, not operating funds.

The members of the PMUA Board, the Executive staff, and many of our employees are not only Plainfield residents, but also rate payers to the PMUA and tax payers to the City. We are committed to work with the City to find solutions to the economic challenges discussed above, and to any and all economic challenges that continue to confront our ability to keep the City clean and keep the costs for doing so within reason.

## Saturday Only Free Leaf Drop-Off

Starting Saturday, October 3rd, 2009 the PMUA will accept free leaf drop-off on Saturday's only at 95 Rock Avenue, PERC Transfer Station throughout the season. This service is for Plainfield residents only. Personal identification must be presented while dropping off your leaves.

\*Please note that a charge will be incurred if brought during the week.

### PERC/Transfer station:

95 Rock Avenue Plainfield, NJ 07060  
Main number: (908) 226-2518

### Hours of Operation:

Monday – Friday 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and  
Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



# Reliance Insurance Group

## Community Outreach

As in past years, PMUA participated in the 2009 "Back to School Jam", donating school supplies and activity books to Plainfield students. Community outreach continues with weekly field visits at high density buildings giving out literature to building managers on how to educate tenants and discuss recycling rules. PMUA recently supplied recycling containers for clean-up at the Summer Bike Safety Rodeo at Library Park and the Plainfield High School Carnival. In addition, the Authority helped institute a pilot program at the Plainfield Health Center to increase their recycling efforts. Other community involvement included the Hispanic Health Fair sponsored by Latinas Enaccion.

## PMUA Thanks Our 2009 Fair Sponsors

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it's even possible to help save a planet.**

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## PMUA NOTICE

**The next PMUA regularly scheduled board meeting will be Tuesday, October 6th at PMUA Headquarters, 127 Roosevelt Avenue, Plainfield, NJ at 7:00 p.m. We encourage the public to attend.**

**There will be no collection of recyclables on the 5th Wednesday of any month.**

**Remember that there will be no collection on Wednesday, December 30th.**

**There will be no garbage collection on Wednesday, November 11th, Thursday, November 25th, Friday, November 27th and Friday, December 25th due to the holidays.**

**With the winter approaching please look for announcements regarding street can placement in times of inclement weather and emergency snow removal.**

## PMUA: MISSION STATEMENT

To Safeguard our Public Health...

Enrich our Environmental Quality of life...

Regulate, Promote and Encourage responsible actions for a cleaner, litter free city...

Invest in Improving our Infrastructure...

By Providing and Managing environmentally friendly, comprehensive and cost-effective collection, transport, recycling, treatment and disposal services for municipal solid waste materials and sanitary sewer.

### PMUA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Carol Ann Brokaw - *Chairperson*  
 Harold Mitchell - *Vice Chairperson*  
 Alex Toliver - *Secretary*  
 David M. Beck - *Treasurer*  
 Eugene Dudley - *Commissioner*  
 Tracey Brown - *Commissioner*

### PMUA EXECUTIVE BOARD

Eric C. Watson - *Executive Director*  
 David Ervin - *Assistant Executive Director*  
 James Perry - *Chief Financial Officer*  
 Duane D. Young - *Comptroller*

### BILLS MAY BE PAID AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

PMUA Headquarters  
 127 Roosevelt Avenue  
 Bank of America  
 335 East Front Street  
 Rapp's Pharmacy  
 611 Park Avenue

### PAYMENTS CAN ALSO BE MAILED TO:

P.O. Box 23310  
 Newark, NJ 07189

Please use return envelope for accurate payment processing

### FORM OF PAYMENT ACCEPTED:

CASH (Rapp's Pharmacy and Bank of America ONLY)

CHECK (Personal, Bank or Electronically Issued)

MONEY ORDER