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## **NBCUA ASKS BERGEN FREEHOLDERS TO OVERRIDE COUNTY EXEC VETO; CHAIRMAN DATOR CITES NEED TO APPEAL TO LOCAL FINANCE BOARD**

Waldwick, NJ, April 2, 2012 – Chairman Bill Dator of the Northwest Bergen County Utilities Authority confirmed in a statement today the Authority has asked Bergen County’s Board of Freeholders to override the County Executive’s veto of the minutes of NBCUA’s special meeting, held March 28.

At that meeting, the Authority Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to appeal her actions to the Local Finance Board. Dator has pointed out her previous rejection of its approved 2012 budget jeopardizes its 2% reduction in sewer charges to member municipalities.

The following is Dator’s statement:

“First it is important to set the record straight. The Northwest Bergen County Utilities Authority is an independent authority created by the Bergen County Board of Freeholders. It is not an agency of the County and receives no County funding. In fact, funding of the Authority is through fees charged only to those who use the system; no ‘taxpayer’ funding is involved.”

“Regarding those fees, the 2012 Authority budget featured a **2% reduction** in user charges. This reduction was made possible by prudent management by the Commissioners and Authority staff. The Authority is committed to additional reductions in user charges in the coming years. Contrast this with any other agency operating in Bergen County. This is not a pledge the County Executive is able to make.”

Dator noted, “In December of 2011, the County Executive vetoed the budget of the Authority as it pertained to salary increases for those employees not covered by contract. Although our budget included a 2% reduction in user charges, she determined that no increases should be given in keeping with County policy. The veto went further, and included annual stipends paid to the Authority Commissioners. The Commissioners agreed to abide by the request to eliminate salary increases, but were advised by counsel that reducing payments to a Commissioner, during his term, was against NJ State Statute.”

“That brings us to the present situation. The County Executive continues to apply her veto pen to every action the Authority Commissioners attempt to clarify the legal situation. After an absurd veto of an Authority meeting last week, claiming the meeting was not in keeping with the Open Public Meetings Act, the County Executive has vetoed a Resolution to ask the State Local Finance Board to review the issue of Commissioner’s pay,” Dator concluded.

“The Commissioners have appealed this veto action to the Board of Freeholders, as required by state law, and are awaiting their action. In the meanwhile, a request for review has been filed with the Local Finance Board. The Commissioners will not be swayed by daily press releases from the office of the County Executive. The Commissioners are determined to continue to pursue all necessary channels until we receive a legal opinion which addresses the State Statutes and clarifies this issue,” he added.

From its plant operating in Waldwick since 1969, NBCUA accommodates the sewer requirements of 75,000 residents. Current municipal members include Allendale, Franklin Lakes, Ho-Ho-Kus, Mahwah, Midland Park, Ramsey, Saddle River, Upper Saddle River, Waldwick and Wyckoff. The Village of Ridgewood also has a service agreement with the Authority.