

## ERIE COUNTY SHOWS A BUDGET WITHOUT LAYOFFS



Erie County, New York, has done a commendable juggling of accounts to manage and absorb a reduction of \$2.6 million without transferring it to shoulders of the unemployed. In short, it managed the shortening of budget without any accompanying layoffs that has become a common ritual around the country. Though the county's 150 departments are expected to work on 2% less budget than last year, the administration has stayed firm in not correlating budget cuts with inevitable layoffs. County commissioner Bill Monaghan told the media, "*We are doing things a lot more efficiently.*" The general fund of the county controlled by county commissioners will be having a surplus of \$121,000 after expenses this year. Public safety has been taken as the highest priority and the county would spend close to \$111 million in 2012 on public safety, public services and other services provided by the county government. In contrast to many other parts of the country, the Erie county administration has shown good management and business acumen. Even last year there was a surplus of \$353,000 in general funds. Commissioner Pat Shenigo said, "*This is our third year of ensuring that our expenses have not exceeded our revenue.*" Last year, Erie County had a total income of \$25.7 million. The county's environmental services department controls water, sewer, landfill and recycling operations and has an annual spending of \$21 million. However, this year the department is working with a reduction of \$2 million. While the department takes on fewer new workers than in the past, job loss has been through the normal process of attrition and there have been no layoffs. The newest source of income for the county is a lead hazard grant amounting to \$1.8 million. The grant will be used to remove toxins from homes in the area.

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