

## Astorino spending cuts: Lay off up to 1,600, close Croton pool, cut NYC buses, delay Playland opening

WHITE PLAINS — Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino said today that a "staggering" fiscal crisis will force the county to shutter the Croton Point Park pool, delay the daily opening of the Rye Playland amusement park and end bus service to New York City.

The measures are part of a plan for drastic cuts in government spending, which could also mean "likely" layoffs for as many as 1,600 county workers if spending can't be cut in other ways.

Astorino said the cuts are necessary due to a projected \$166 million budget gap next year, far above the \$60 million deficit he was told he inherited when he took office in January.

He called the actual deficit "staggering," and called it the result of "unrestrained spending for many years" in the county.

And he said he was committed to presenting a 2011 budget in November that would not call for an increase in [property taxes](#).

But he said that would take shared sacrifice and hard choices. Astorino said the first phase of the cuts is to eliminate \$16 million in spending this year. Among the short-term measures are:

- Cut \$5.8 million from the Department of Social Services by better management of foster care and other measures.

- Cut \$1.37 million from the Department of Transportation by eliminating bus service to [New York City](#) and other steps.

- Cut \$1.6 million from the parks department by leaving 20 positions vacant, closing the pool at Croton Point Park and having a delayed opening at the Rye Playland amusement park.

- Cut \$905,000 from public safety by not filling vacancies and redeploying officers to reduce overtime costs in the department.

"It's a multi-year attack but we must start now," Astorino said.

Astorino said long-term measures that could be implemented next year include possible pay freezes that could [save](#) taxpayers \$20.5 million, salary cuts that could save as much as \$47.6 million, and layoffs that could save as much as \$160 million.

Astorino said layoffs were the last measure he wanted to implement, but said it is up to county employees to cut elsewhere and save their jobs.

"The news is not good," he said at a midday press conference. "It's worse than expected, and it's not going to get better any time soon."

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