

[Press Release]

ONE DAY ONE SCHOOL BEAUTIFICATION AND SAFETY INITIATIVE COMING TO MORRIS PLAINS

Organizers of the nationally recognized "One Day One School" beautification and safety initiative have announced that their next event will take place at Morris Plains Schools on Saturday, October 10, 2015. The program will bring together tree experts, school officials, town representatives and organizations, local businesses and students, all volunteering their own time and effort to make their community's school grounds cleaner and safer. Morris Plains Mayor, Frank Druetzler states, "One Day One School is truly a 'shared services' program that is a great benefit to our local schools and communities."

Neighboring districts like East Hanover, Hanover Twp, Florham Park and Denville have seen the benefits of this successful project in past years. Mayor Druetzler and Councilwoman Suzanne McCluskey have been working with the leaders of those towns, along with Morris Plains Schools Superintendent Mark Maire, to bring similar results for the Borough School grounds.

The nationally recognized program was founded in 2006 by Tom "Ace" Gallagher of Whippany's Ace Gallagher Stump Grinding. The initiative has steadily expanded each year to include the participation of several additional tree services, school and town officials and public works departments from surrounding municipalities, along with community organizations and partnering businesses. The organizers are quick to identify the grassroots, voluntary nature of the program as the central key to its ongoing success. When Mayor Druetzler heard about the award-winning program, he felt it could be a success in Morris Plains. He introduced the idea to Superintendent Maire, who was thrilled with the potential benefits of the program. Many local businesses, including Arthur's Tavern and Morris Plains T-Shirt Factory, are anxiously rallying their support.

"Ace" Gallagher points out, "The program's pro-active approach is more important than ever. With budgets the way they are now, funds are usually allocated for the removal of trees only after they have failed." To date, "One Day One School" has collectively saved local participating districts over one half million dollars. Gallagher, a former Board of Education member and a present Committeeman in Hanover Twp. says, "Every time you can save a district a thousand dollars, that's a computer. If you save \$60,000, that's a new teacher."

Thanks to coverage in local media and national publications such as Tree Care Industry Association Magazine, the program has captured the attention of municipalities and organizations as far away as Virginia, Montana and Massachusetts. The organizers were also presented with the New Jersey Green Community Achievement Award at the New Jersey Shade Tree Foundation's annual meeting in Cherry Hill in October 2009.

The day's activities will begin at 8:30 a.m. with area tree care partners and landscapers donating their time, equipment, and services to prune and remove dangerous trees and branches. At 9:30 a.m., volunteer crews will be assisted by the professionals in a complete cleanup of the area, followed by the planting of new trees and shrubs. The day's events will conclude with a barbecue for all participants at 12:30 p.m., with food contributed by local businesses and prepared and served by Morris Plains Rotary Club volunteers. As always, the organizers are inviting anybody that may be interested to get involved. Additional information is available through the Morris Plains School Administrative Offices.

Added elements of the program include environmental education and an ongoing emphasis on safety. Superintendent Maire says, "We are thrilled to host an event that brings local municipalities and school stakeholders together to promote beautification, safety and environmental awareness. Anyone who has interest in helping out with the One Day, One School initiative is encouraged to contact the superintendent's office at 973-538-1650 or visit One Day One School on Facebook. The rain date for the program is Saturday, October 17th, but according to Mayor Druetzler, "It never rains in Morris Plains!"