

# Cheers to cops on drug tests

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Editorial

There was good news and bad news concerning police at last week's [West Manchester Township](#) board of supervisor's meeting. First, the good news:

**Good request:** We randomly drug test bus drivers, train engineers, student athletes and professional athletes -- and many companies randomly test employees of all ranks.

But we don't drug test cops.

Well, not all of them.

It came as something of a surprise to learn officers in the West Manchester Township Police Department are not required to pass random drug tests.

On second thought, it probably shouldn't have come as a surprise, considering the allegations against former Det. Steven Crider. He's accused of taking drugs from the evidence room, jeopardizing an as-yet untold number of cases.

It's a black eye for the department. And to their credit, officers want to rebuild the lost trust with citizens.

As part of new contract negotiations, the officers requested -- *requested* -- that random drug testing be part of the new rules, from rank-and-file officers right up to the chief.

We salute them for this initiative. Further, we encourage other local municipal departments that currently lack random drug screening to institute such programs.

In fact, perhaps state legislators should require *all* police officers to undergo drug screening.

One other thing West Manchester Police -- and other local municipal departments -- should do to bolster public confidence: Become accredited by the [Pennsylvania](#) Chiefs of Police Association. The process puts in place best practices for evidence management that might have prevented the situation allegedly involving Det. Crider.

Unfortunately, just six [York County](#) departments have been accredited: York Area Regional, Fairview, Newberry, Penn, Spring Garden and Springettsbury townships. West Manchester Township should join their ranks soon -- as should all other local departments.

**Clause for alarm:** Better yet, police departments in York's inner-ring suburbs should join together and form an accredited regional police department, as YorkCounts has been advocating.

Unfortunately, the other police news from last week could put a damper on such possibilities: West Manchester officials said police are seeking a "non-regionalization clause" in their contract.

Township supervisors should decline that request, which would seriously hamper regionalization efforts in the future. A metro York police department would be far more effective with West Manchester as a member.

Perhaps current supervisors are not ready to sign on to that idea. Fine. But keep open minds and open lines of communication. And don't put into a contract a clause that could handcuff future supervisors who might be more interested in the concept.