EAST CHICAGO life

YOUR LOCAL SOURCE FOR EAST CHICAGO NEWS AND EVENTS

EAST CHICAGO STRONGER TOGETHER

City of East Chicago
Hope & Progress
INDIANA

STAY HEALTHY.
STAY HOME.
STOP THE SPREAD.

East Chicago is committed to keeping you safe during this extraordinary health crisis.

Please stay home to help stop the spread of coronavirus and continue to practice safe social distancing when shopping or enjoying the outdoors.

East Chicago, we are stronger together!

Get the latest updates, data, demograhics and more online at **eastchicago.com**.

Expanded healthcare team will navigate pandemic while looking beyond COVID-19

As we tackle the challenges posed by Covid-19, I am pleased to announce we have a new health team in place to more effectively meet the health-care needs of East Chicago. Led by Health Director Diana Garcia-Burns, a nurse practitioner who returns to us with a wealth of emergency and community health experience, the new team includes a soon-to-be-announced full-time community health nurse. Together, with Health Officer Dr. Gerri Browning, they will help us curb the spread of this deadly virus.

SAFETY & PROTECTION

A reminder, we continue to keep city buildings closed to the public and provide all workers with personal protective equipment — masks, goggles, gloves and gowns — along with hand sanitizers in every city vehicle and inside all public buildings. While we encourage everyone in the city to wear face masks when they must go out for essential travel, appropriate protective gear is mandatory for all city personnel.

WHAT'S NEXT?

I am hearing from you about concerns about next steps, how East Chicago will recover and rebuild its economy. I want you to rest easy. While the coming months will not be easy, our city is better positioned than most to move forward. Because cash reserves were built over the last decade, East Chicago is in the enviable position of having money to pay our bills this year with no threat of layoffs in 2020.



Mayor Anthony Copeland welcomes Health Director Diana Burns, right, to the team. Learn more about the changes coming to the city's health department on Page 3. [Steve Segura photo]

STRONGER THAN BEFORE

Make no mistake: There will be trying days ahead. You can be confident we are prepared to emerge from this momentary pause even stronger than we were before.

ANTHONY COPELAND
Mayor City of East Chicago

KEEPING OUR RESIDENTS INFORMED

AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND LATINO GROUPS HIT HARDEST BY COVID-19

As Health Officer for the City of East Chicago, I feel obligated to address the rising numbers of African Americans who are dying from coronavirus infections.

Because of health disparities, a city like East Chicago is a likely target due to its large Latino and African-American communities.



DR. GERRI BROWNING

These minority groups tend to suffer from obesity, hypertension, asthma and diabetes mellitus, among other chronic diseases, which make them more vulnerable and more likely to die of COVID-19.

Although testing for the virus has begun, it will be some time before we know the true prevalence in our community. It is important to remember; while many of us are at higher risk of dying from coronavirus, the virus has shown it is lethal and can infect anyone.

Consistent with the governor's stay-at-home orders and the Centers for Disease Control guidance on social distancing, I recommend we continue to stay at home, avoiding extra people and crowds. Public gatherings should be limited to fewer than 10 and we should remain 6 feet away from others – even while wearing masks and facial coverings.

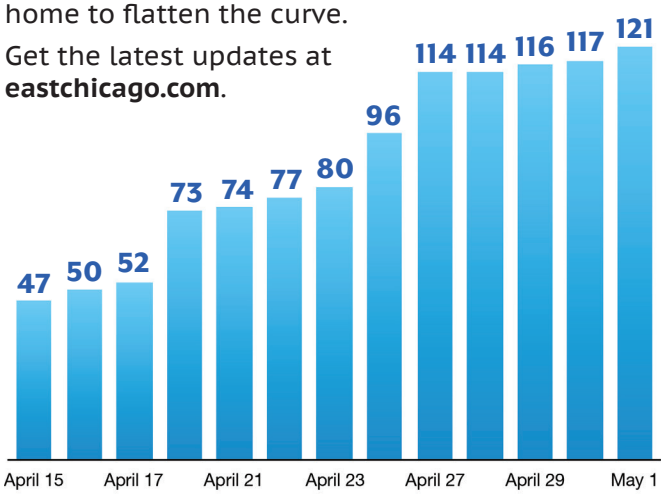
For the best outcomes, stay home and be safe. This guidance is what is best for the people of East Chicago.

Dr. Gerri Browning is the Health Officer for the East Chicago Department of Health. Get the latest updates, data and more at eastchicago.com.

EAST CHICAGO COVID-19 CASES

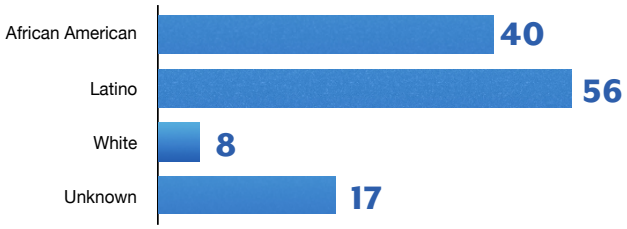
The number of positive Covid-19 cases in East Chicago has more than doubled since mid-April. It's imperative we continue to stay home to flatten the curve.

Get the latest updates at **eastchicago.com**.



COVID-19 CASES BY ETHNICITY

East Chicago's African American and Latino communities have been hit the hardest with nearly 75 percent of positive cases.



COVID-19 CASES BY GENDER

Females outpace males among East Chicago's positive Covid-19 cases.



SOURCE: East Chicago Department of Health



HEALTHCARE TEAM: Mayor Anthony Copeland welcomes newly appointed Health Director Diana Garcia-Burns. Together, with Health Officer Dr. Gerri Browning and the Health Department staff, the team will help us navigate the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. [Steve Segura photo]

ABOUT THE NEW HEALTH DIRECTOR

Diana Garcia-Burns' return to East Chicago Health Department is all about coming home.

The new Health Director is a nurse practitioner with a masters degree in adult health who most recently served as director of the emergency department at St. Catherine Hospital.

She has a wealth of experience that includes 13 years as Health Department Director for the city she calls home.

NEW DIRECTOR JOINS CITY'S HEALTHCARE TEAM

Diana Garcia-Burns was hired late last month and began work as East Chicago Health Director about 10 minutes later.

The nurse practitioner wouldn't have it any other way.

Her plan — and that of Mayor Anthony Copeland — are to ramp up services at the city health department — one of only two city health departments remaining in Indiana.

"I am very confident in the skills and administrative leadership Mrs. Garcia-Burns brings to the department," Mayor Anthony Copeland said. "She has been through the H1N1 crisis and is ready to hit the ground running."

"COVID-19 is obviously the first priority because of the urgent need to identify those who have it as well as those who had it – whether or not they were symptomatic," Garcia-Burns said.

The East Chicago Health Department has a mission to get back to the essential business of helping our community.

"This virus is highlighting disparities in access to healthcare right here in East Chicago," she said. "We are keeping track of how this virus is trending while we look ahead to the seasonal flu and ways to minimize its impact."

KEEPING OUR FIRST RESPONDERS SAFE



[Steve Segura photo]

LOCAL SUPPLIERS PRODUCING PPE

When Fire Chief Anthony Serna was tasked with finding additional personal protective gear — masks, gloves, goggles and gowns — every other city, county and state in the country was looking for the same items.

Thanks to Serna and his team, the city found suppliers close to home that can meet East Chicago's needs.

- Tradewinds, which intially produced 8,000 masks and gowns for East Chicago, will be an ongoing supplier.
- Fastenal, a supply-chain with offices in East Chicago, produces N95 masks and other industrial safety gear.
- Sterno Products, the longtime supplier of canned heat for caterers, also manufactures durable food delivery bags at its factory in LaPorte. This material is now being used to produce masks.

"We have been blessed to find these suppliers so close to home, who are eager to work with us to provide what we need," Serna said. "These are important partnerships to keep our employees safe."



FRONTLINE HEROES

Mayor Anthony Copeland extends a huge thank you to all essential workers — police, fire, ambulance and public works — who are weathering the storm, putting themselves on the line to keep the city safe. "We are in great shape, but we wouldn't be without them," Copeland said. "We pray daily for their safety and thank them for their service."

THANK YOU EAST CHICAGO, EMPLOYEES! WE LOVE OUR HEROES!

KEEPING EAST CHICAGO CLEAN



[Keith Selvie photos]



SANITIZING & SOCIAL DISTANCING

As long as the threat of Coronavirus continues, Mayor Anthony Copeland says the city will retain ownership of older model vehicles to provide additional social distancing. "Public Works has been seriously impacted by COVID-19," he said. "We are doing everything we can to keep them safe, including sanitizing all East Chicago Public Works vehicles." (shown above)

NEW FLEET HITS THE STREETS

Four new solid waste collection vehicles arrived just in time amid the pandemic.

The trucks, which have arms for automated garbage pick-up, do not require CDL drivers.

Public Works Director Keith Selvie said the new trucks give the department flexibility to have any employee to operate the truck.

"The new vehicles offer the same bells and whistles as other trucks," Selvie said. "What sets them apart is their smaller size and driver-friendly operation that will keep our workers safe in this time of COVID-19."

Most of the city fleet has required a CDL driver and two laborers. With the new trucks — which cost $188,794 each — pickups will be completed by one driver and one assistant.

"This gives public works employees an opportunity to work on different assignments to keep the city even cleaner," he said.

STUDENT PARADE

East Chicago Police and Fire departments along with the Schools are staging a parade for the record books, celebrating every student for academic achievement in the midst of the pandemic. Police Chief Hector Rosario is encouraging families to show their spirit by decorating their homes and wearing school colors.

WHEN: Begins at 10 a.m. **Thursday, May 28**

WHERE: The parade will be traveling every street in the city. More information will be available on Facebook, Nixel and eastchicago.com.

CANCELLATIONS

All City of East Chicago specials events have been postponed until further notice. Officials are reviewing options for the city's Independence Day Celebration in July, but no decision has been made. Stay tuned for details!

RECYCLING CHANGES

Beginning May 11, East Chicago Public Works will no longer collect recyclables curbside. All recycling totes must be placed in the alley behind your residence for pickup. The only exceptions are areas that do not have alleys, such as Prairie Park, Marktown, and Sunnyside.

Collection days by district:

Monday: Districts 1 and 2
Wednesday: Districts 3 and 4
Friday: Districts 5 and 6

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RESIDENT
EAST CHICAGO, INDIANA 46312

FREE OFFER!

OPERATION LIGHT IT UP!

LIGHT UP YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD. HELP REDUCE CRIME.

The city is purchasing and installing 60 residential dusk-to-dawn lights to provide additional lighting, security and safety in neighborhoods throughout East Chicago.

ONLY 60 LIGHTS AVAILABLE.

10 PER DISTRICT. 1 PER RESIDENT.

Lights will be mounted on one exterior wall of resident's choosing. Applications and documents can be submitted online, by mail or email.

DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, MAY 29

www.EASTCHICAGO.com

FOR COMPLETE DETAILS