EAST CHICAGO life

YOUR LOCAL SOURCE FOR EAST CHICAGO NEWS AND EVENTS

EAST CHICAGO STRONGER TOGETHER

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**.

We're not out of the woods, yet ... your participation is essential to moving forward!

When I head out the door each morning, the first thing I reach for is a mask. When I get to work, the first thing I do is wash my hands thoroughly — with soap or sanitizer.

This has become my new routine. I hope it is yours.

It's our way of fighting back against a deadly virus.

STILL CLIMBING ...

The number of positive cases continues to increase by an average of 3-10 cases each day. What that tells our Health Department is that we haven't hit that goal of being on the downside of the curve.

We will get there — but we aren't there yet. It's going to take all of us, working together, to make that happen. I still see way too many people out and about, mixing with others before it is safe to do so.

NEXT STEPS ...

I get asked all the time: "What will it take to reopen East Chicago?"

I am going to be slow and methodical when it comes to reopening the city. I would love to throw the doors open and go back to the way it used to be. I can't. We aren't there yet.

We are working to establish a new normal where we can live our lives — and still remain safe. There has been no all-clear yet. The virus hasn't been conquered. A vaccine hasn't been created.



Mayor Anthony Copeland checks in at a coronavirus testing site. The city and its partners offered free testing to residents. See page 2 for the Health Department's latest update on the Covid-19 crisis. [Steve Segura photo]

The biggest factor in taking next steps is you.

Wear masks. Wash your hands — long enough and often enough. Stay away from crowds — of any size.

Stay the course and we will emerge even better than we were before.

ANTHONY COPELAND
Mayor City of East Chicago



COVID-19 TESTING: After five days of on-site COVID-19 testing, the number of East Chicago residents who have been tested for the virus has gone up. Still, to beat the virus, we need for more residents to volunteer to be tested. Health Department Director Diana Garcia-Burns said Indiana pop-up testing site locations are announced two to three days before testers arrive on site. Please check the city website – eastchicago.com — for the most up-to-date information. [Steve Segura photo]

KEEPING RESIDENTS HEALTHY DURING CRISIS

As the city continues to shelter in place, East Chicago Health Department Director Diana Garcia-Burns and her staff are keeping an eye on the impact of COVID-19 while they begin welcoming residents back for TB testing, immunizations and other health services.

"We don't know yet all of the reasons minorities are disproportionately impacted by this virus, but we know the best way to protect them is by helping them stay well," Garcia-Burns said. "We know keeping blood sugars and blood pressure under control are absolutely essential."

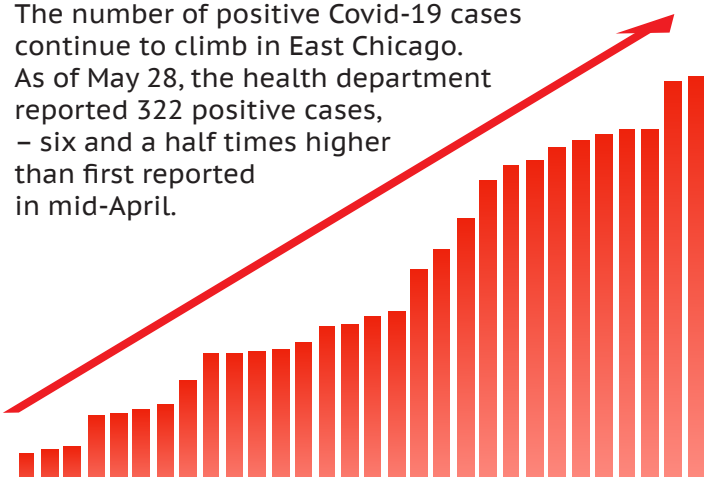
She is encouraging residents to call first.

"We take walk-ins but it absolutely saves residents time if they give us a quick call so we can let them know if we have people waiting," she said. "We don't want to limit residents — we just want them to know we respect their time and safety."

INFO: Please call (219) 391-8467.

EAST CHICAGO COVID-19 CASES

The number of positive Covid-19 cases continue to climb in East Chicago. As of May 28, the health department reported 322 positive cases, – six and a half times higher than first reported in mid-April.



SOURCE: East Chicago Department of Health

Dramatically increase your chances of avoiding coronavirus by following the rules of social, respiratory and hand hygiene. Outside your home, wear masks and stay six feet away from others. Wash your hands for a full 30 seconds when you return home. Get the latest updates at **eastchicago.com**.



BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS: Workers install a new gazebo at MacArthur Golf Course (above). Surrounded by weeping willows and a beautiful pond, the new venue is perfect for weddings, graduations and other events. Roxana Park now features a new shelter with picnic tables and a walking trail for residents to enjoy. Parks, pools and the golf course will remain closed until further notice. [Mayra Acosta and Steve Segura photos]





KEEPING RESIDENTS INFORMED AND SAFE: Parks and Recreation installed displays (above left) at all the city parks that will house Covid-19 posters explaining what is open and available for use. The posters will be swapped out every time a new stage is reached. The main office building (above right) received a facelift in addition to a new ADA accessible ramp to better serve residents.

PARKS & RECREATION UPDATE

While residents are sequestered from the city's green spaces, Parks and Recreation Director Mayra Acosta said her department is busy updating park facilities. Here's a quick look at what's happening:

- Display cases have been installed in all parks reflecting what is open and available for use.
- A mural will be painted around the greenhouse by a local artist.
- Organic produce raised at the greenhouse is being distributed to Catholic Charities and, hopefully, a drive-up for local residents.
- City pools will be reopened next summer with new filtering systems and heaters.
- Two soccer fields are being constructed at Marktown park.
- All parks have picnic tables under shelters.
- The office parking lot will be resealed and relined now that the new ramp is complete.



[Anthony Serna photo]





PARADES BRING JOY AMID CRISIS

Weeks before Yessenia Magnus' 10th birthday, her parents went looking for ways to make their daughter's birthday special in the time of COVID.

A quirk of fate allowed her father, Freddy Magnus, to combine the family's love of vintage cars with the unmistakable lure of police cars and fire engines in a parade that lit up the neighborhood and gave Yessenia (pictured above) the celebration of her short life.

"She heard the sirens, but didn't know what was going on," Magnus said. "When she realized this parade was for her, she cried such happy tears."

As a special gift, firefighters allowed Yessenia to sit in the truck and blow the gigantic horn.

Fire Chief Anthony Serna said parades for healthcare workers, high school graduates and birthdays allow first responders to serve residents in a special way.

"We are happy to help especially now when everyone is social distancing because of coronavirus," he said. "Serving people is what we do. It's why we are here."

Magnus said his daughter will never forget that day and the way the city made her feel. "It shows how special East Chicago is; that they would do all this for her."





[Steve Segura photos]



MUNICIPAL CODE 93.085

East Chicago MC 93.085 stipulates:

- Lawns, alley lines and parkways shall be manicured to a height no taller than 6 inches and shall be free from excision letter. If you receive a Violation Notice, you have five days to mow your lawn.
- Bushes, trees and shrubs shall be maintained and cut so as to not grow into or obstruct any public way, including but not limited to, sidewalks, alley lines and parkways.

INFO: Visit **eastchicago.com** and select the law department for complete code details.

KEEPING THE OUTDOORS UP-TO-CODE

YARD DEBRIS & LAWN MOWING

As we transition to warmer weather, please make sure your lawn is mowed and your yard is free of debris. "City code states that grass cannot be taller than 6 inches," Code Enforcement Manager Damien Ventura said. "Residents can avoid a Violation Notice by regularly mowing their lawn and removing old tires, wood pallets and other debris."

FENCE MAINTENANCE

If your fence took a hit from snow and ice, it's a perfect time to get it back in ship-shape. If you don't, it's likely you'll get cited by Code Enforcement. While new fences require a building permit, fence repairs that are less than $500 do not.

GARBAGE CANS

Overflowing garbage cans are an eyesore and invitation to critters looking for an easy meal. Please be sure to secure garbage can lids and tie up plastic bags to keep them out. If your garbage cart is consistently overflowing, call EC Public Works at (219) 391-8463 to request a second cart.

INFO: For more about these and other East Chicago codes, call Building Department at (219) 391-8294.

LIBRARY OFFERS CURBSIDE SERVICE

The East Chicago Public Library is offering curbside service to those who have accounts in good standing. Here are the steps:

1. Select a location and call to place your items on hold with your library card number.
2. We'll call you when your order is ready. Tell us when you'll it pick up.
3. Call us when you arrive and provide your name, phone, ID, description of vehicle and orange cone number. Items will be delivered to your vehicle when you arrive.

WHEN: 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

INFO: Call the main library at (219) 397-2453, extension 21 or the Pastrick Branch at (219) 397-5505, extention 10.

CANCELLATIONS

All special events have been canceled or postponed until further notice.

WEED SPRAYING

When Public Works sprays for unsightly weeds, please keep away from those with blue on them. The dye is there to make residents aware that spraying has taken place. The chemical is harmless to humans after it dries, which takes about 20 minutes. Accidental contact: wash with a mild soap and water for 20 seconds.

INFO: Call (219) 391-8463.

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HOW MANY LIVE UNDER YOUR ROOF?

United States® Census 2020

Census 2020 deadlines have been extended until October 31 amid the Covid-19 crisis. However, if you do not respond, census workers will begin visiting households in August.



www.CENSUS.gov

STAND UP AND BE COUNTED TODAY!