EAST CHICAGO life

YOUR LOCAL SOURCE FOR EAST CHICAGO NEWS AND EVENTS

EAST CHICAGO STRONGER TOGETHER

City of East Chicago
Hope & Progress
INDIANA

WEAR A MASK.
SOCIAL DISTANCE.
STOP THE SPREAD.

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

Stop the spread of coronavirus! Outside your home – wear a mask, maintain 6 feet distance from others and wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.

East Chicago, we are stronger together!

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

East Chicago is a city of hope and progress as we continue to look out for each other

As one of the first communities in Indiana to mandate masks, I am pleased to report our governor has made masks the standard in Indiana.

Before we can turn the tide on COVID-19, the most optimistic scientists say it will take at least eight weeks of:

- Everyone wearing a mask
- Being diligent about washing our hands and using hand sanitizer
- Staying home and out of crowds

If that seems like a tall order, consider we have already been living through this epidemic for more than 18 weeks. It is up to us to do everything we can to reduce its impact on our lives and to make our community even stronger.

I'm not grateful for the virus, but I am counting our blessings for the kindness that's been bestowed upon us during this time of uncertainty.

Just a few short weeks ago, the Black Farmers Network delivered nearly 40,000 pounds of produce for East Chicago residents. That was 1,598 boxes, each holding 25 pounds of celery, onions, potatoes and more.

That food was an answer to many, many, many prayers. I had asked the Lord to provide food full of vitamins and nutrients our community needs to fend off this virus. In his wisdom and abundance, my prayers were answered.



Mayor Anthony Copeland joins volunteers July 10 at the food drive with our East Chicago churches. The city distributed 1,598 boxes or 50 boxes for every church throughout the city. For more information, please see page 4. [Steve Segura photo]

I prayed that East Chicago residents would respond to our call for help to unload and deliver the produce to city churches for distribution.

Again, my prayers were answered. It was hot and heavy work that was made lighter because of the joy in the people who stepped up to help.

We are blessed to live in a community that cares for each other — in abundance.

ANTHONY COPELAND
Mayor City of East Chicago

COVID-19 UPDATE: WHERE WE'RE AT NOW

HEALTH DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR URGES RESIDENTS TO WEAR MASKS

As East Chicago's coronavirus numbers continue to climb, Health Department Director Diana Garcia-Burns and her team continue to drive home the message: **Mask up to beat COVID-19**.

It's not just East Chicago. The city's increases mirror Indiana's numbers. Statewide, the spike pushed numbers over 1,000 new cases diagnosed each day.



DIANA GARCIA-BURNS

In East Chicago, there were days in late July where 33 residents tested positive in just 24 hours despite a mask mandate that went into effect by order of the East Chicago Common Council July 8. If the virus was contained, health experts say the city would see no more than one or two cases per week.

It is the East Chicago's 20- to 40-year-olds who are increasingly testing positive.

The bright spots:

- Most of those infected are able to quarantine and recover at home
- The number of residents losing their lives to COVID-19 is not increasing.

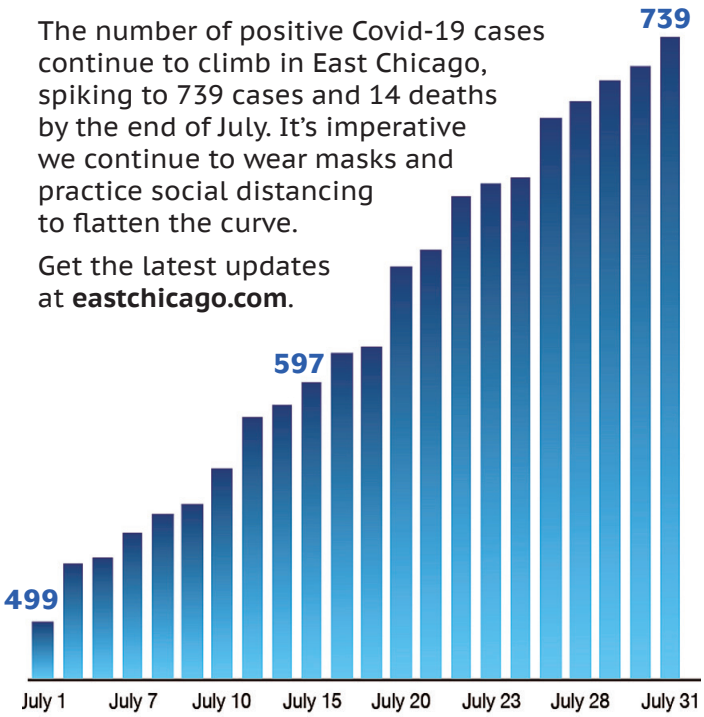
"Our city, sadly, has lost 14 lives to COVID," Garcia-Burns said. "Our team continues to encourage people to follow a healthy routine, wear masks and get tested. As hard as it is, we are also encouraging our residents to refrain from travel to any of the nation's hotspots. This virus continues to pose a danger."

Diana Garcia-Burns is the Director 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 continue to climb in East Chicago, spiking to 739 cases and 14 deaths by the end of July. It's imperative we continue to wear masks and practice social distancing to flatten the curve.

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



SOURCE: East Chicago Department of Health

[LOCAL TESTING SITES]

The Indiana State Department of Health now offers free testing throughout Lake County. Please visit **eastchicago.com** and click on the **COVID/Novel Coronavirus Information** link under the Health Department. There you will find the **local testing sites** link for the latest locations and dates. Or visit the following East Chicago locations:

OLD WALGREENS SITE: Chicago and Indianapolis

Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, including weekends

Payment options: No cost for uninsured. If you have insurance, they will bill your insurance company.

HEALTHLINC: 1313 West Chicago Avenue

Hours: 1-4 p.m. Tuesday and 9 a.m.-noon Thursday

Payment options: No cost for uninsured. If you have insurance, they will bill your insurance company.

Appointment required: Call (219) 398-9685.



IN-PERSON VISITS UNDERWAY

[WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW]

Census takers are now visiting households in East Chicago and throughout Lake County that haven't responded to the 2020 Census.

Residents can respond now online at **2020census.gov**, calling (844) 330-2020 or by completing and mailing back the paper questionnaire you received in the mail. Deadline is October 31.

[IDENTIFYING CENSUS TAKERS]

Census takers can be easily identified by a valid government ID badge with their photograph, a U.S. Department of Commerce watermark, and an expiration date on the badge. If no one is home when the census taker visits, the census taker will leave a notice of their visit with information about how to respond online, by phone or by mail. People are encouraged to cooperate with census takers and ensure that everyone who was living in their household as of April 1, 2020, is counted.

INFO: To confirm a census taker's identity, please call the Chicago Regional Census Center at (312) 579-1500.

[WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT]

All census takers will follow CDC and local public health guidelines when they visit. Census takers:

- Are required to wear a mask while conducting their work.
- Must complete a virtual COVID-19 training on social distancing protocols and other health and safety guidance before beginning their work in neighborhoods.
- Are hired from local communities.
- All census takers speak English, and many are bilingual. If a census taker does not speak the householder's language, the household may request a return visit from a census taker who does. Census takers will also have materials on hand to identify the household's language.

Shape your future
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United States® Census 2020



[Jonathan Madera photos]

[FOOD ASSISTANCE]

Mayor Anthony Copeland and dozens of volunteers distributed a truckload of fresh produce to East Chicago churches in July. Each place of worship received 50 boxes of food, each weighing 25 lbs.

"We've been blessed with a bounty of fruits and vegetables," he said. "We are a city of hope and progress and hope begins when we look out for each other."

August food assistance includes, but not limited to:

- East Chicago Parks and Recreation's Curbside Market is held from 1-3:30 p.m. Thursdays at the Park Office Parking Lot, 1615 E. 142nd St.
- The Salvation Army serves hot meals from its mobile canteen from noon-1 p.m. at 513 W. Chicago Ave. The pantry is open 9-11 a.m. Monday through Thursday.

[RENTAL ASSISTANCE]

Rental assistance of up to $2,000 over four months is available to households impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program is designed to help Indiana renters avoid eviction by covering monthly rent payments or late fees.

PLEASE NOTE: The program cannot be used with other emergency pandemic-related rent assistance. Individuals that receive Section 8 or USDA Rural Development rental assistance or live in public housing, are not eligible for the Indiana COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program.

INFO: For program requirements and to apply, please visit **indianahousingnow.org**.

[WELLNESS ASSISTANCE]

Need help during the COVID-19 crisis? The Be Well Crisis Helpline provides free access to counselors who can listen and help by simply calling 2-1-1.

COVID-19 has caused a rise in mental health-related issues, including new stresses brought on by social isolation and the lack of traditional support systems such as family, friends, schools, religious and other community organizations. For many, anxiety regarding financial stress, grief, loss of a loved one and the loss of one's normal routine, along with all of the unknowns regarding COVID-19, is overwhelming.

INFO: Visit **www.BeWellIndiana.org** for additional mental health resources available to residents.







[Steve Segura photos]

[MAGNIFICENT MURAL]

Hometown artist Felix Maldonado is spending his summer transforming the facade of the Washington Park Greenhouse. Over the vintage brick walls, the career professional is interspersing images of brown-eyed susans and daisies, hummingbirds and deep-pink echinacea that meld perfectly with live plantings that surround the vintage buildings. "I am happy to be home, doing a mural in East Chicago, 30 years after I began this career," Maldonado said as he took a break on a brutally hot day in July. "I am proud of what we will be unveiling in August."

The Roxanna resident will be adding the greenhouse murals to his portfolio, which includes an extensive history of solo and group art exhibitions throughout the country with exhibits at South Shore Arts - Munster, CISA Gallery- Hammond, Mexican Fine Arts Museum-Chicago, Art Expo- Chicago, Swope Museum-Terre Haute, SOMArts Museum-San Francisco, Chicago Cultural Center in Chicago and the Armory's Fountain Art Fair in New York City.

INFO: Learn more at **www.FelixMaldonado.com**.

PARKS & RECREATION

Recreation centers are open with restrictions. Everyone is required to wear masks. Here's the latest update:

Recreation centers: Attendance is limited to 15 in the gym and three in the workout facilities. Our community rooms are closed. Social distancing and protective masks are required at all times.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Appointment required: Call Heritage Hall at (219) 391-8380 or Unity Center at (219) 397-2392. Everyone must sign a waiver form.

Playgrounds and exercise equipment: Although we've enhanced cleaning measures, residents must wipe down equipment before and after each use.

Greenhouse: Hours and services are limited.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Wednesday

Info: Call (219) 391-8474 to schedule an appointment.

MacArthur Golf Course: Hours and golfing services are limited.

Hours: 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday

Info: Call (219) 391-8362.

CANCELLATIONS

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

CLOSURES

Jeorse Park Beach, the Splash Pad, H2Oh water sports rentals and all city pools remain closed.

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