EAST CHICAGO life

YOUR LOCAL SOURCE FOR EAST CHICAGO NEWS AND EVENTS

EAST CHICAGO STRONGER TOGETHER

BRIDGE TOLLS

There will be no tolls charged the first 30 days and for the second month, there will be a $1 toll for E-ZPass and I-Pass users.

Tolls for vehicles with electronic payment systems after 60 days will be $2.50 for two-axle vehicles; $6.50 for three- to four-axle vehicles; and $10.50 for five-axle vehicles.

For pay by plate, tolls will be $5.50 for two-axle vehicles; $9.50 for three- to four-axle vehicles; and $13.50 for five-axle vehicles.





"Thank you to everyone involved in this project, from legislators, builders, construction workers, civic leaders and everyone in the community who patiently waited for this project's completion," Mayor Anthony Copeland said. "The road to progress continues in East Chicago." [Steve Segura photos]

Road to progress continues in East Chicago

CLINE AVENUE BRIDGE

Christmas came early to East Chicago with a gift that is going to keep on giving. The Cline Avenue bridge opened to traffic on an extremely windy Dec. 23 when dozens of cars safely traveled from one end of the 1.2 mile bridge to the other. While construction was privately funded, the city will get 10 cents for every car and truck that drives it. We should all hope that the bridge sees a lot of traffic. Rest assured, we will put the money we receive to good use.

NEW POLICE OFFICERS

Also in December, we welcomed seven new police officers to fill important vacancies. Chief Rosario is already working to fill the last 11 positions. More officers are leaving policing than are entering the field. That issue is bigger than East Chicago. We are looking forward to national groups addressing the problem this year to increase the size of the pool of police professionals. They are vital to our success.

COVID-19 CRISIS

While we have turned the calendar on 2020, COVID-19 has entered 2021 with us. As excited as we are about the vaccine that will be administered by our staff at the East Chicago Health Department, it's going to take months and a healthy turnout from our community before we see declines in the number of new cases. Please continue to wash your hands, wear a mask and stay home as much as possible to reduce the spread.



ANTHONY COPELAND
Mayor City of East Chicago

FREE COVID-19 VACCINATIONS BEGIN IN JANUARY

The East Chicago Health Department will begin administering the Moderna vaccine in January to protect against the COVID-19 virus.

Health Department Director Diana Garcia-Burns said residents should make an appointment for the first dose of the two-stage vaccine and bring a state-issued ID or driver's license with them.

Before you leave your first vaccination appointment, staff will schedule a follow-up visit 28 days later to get the second Moderna dose, which is essential to be protected.

"Vaccines are free and I urge every East Chicago resident to get the shots as they become available for your group, which is based on age and medical need," she said.

"Our city's residents have been particularly hard hit in our region – and state — for the number of cases. In just nine months, we have had more than 2,500 cases and lost 36 souls. Our best defense against getting — and spreading —this disease is the vaccine."

Because supplies are limited, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is recommending who should be offered COVID-19 vaccines first. Healthcare personnel and long-term care facilities will go first, followed by essential works and those over 75 years of age.

INFO: Visit eastchicago.com to learn more or call the health department at (219) 391-8467 to schedule your vaccination.

[COVID TESTING]

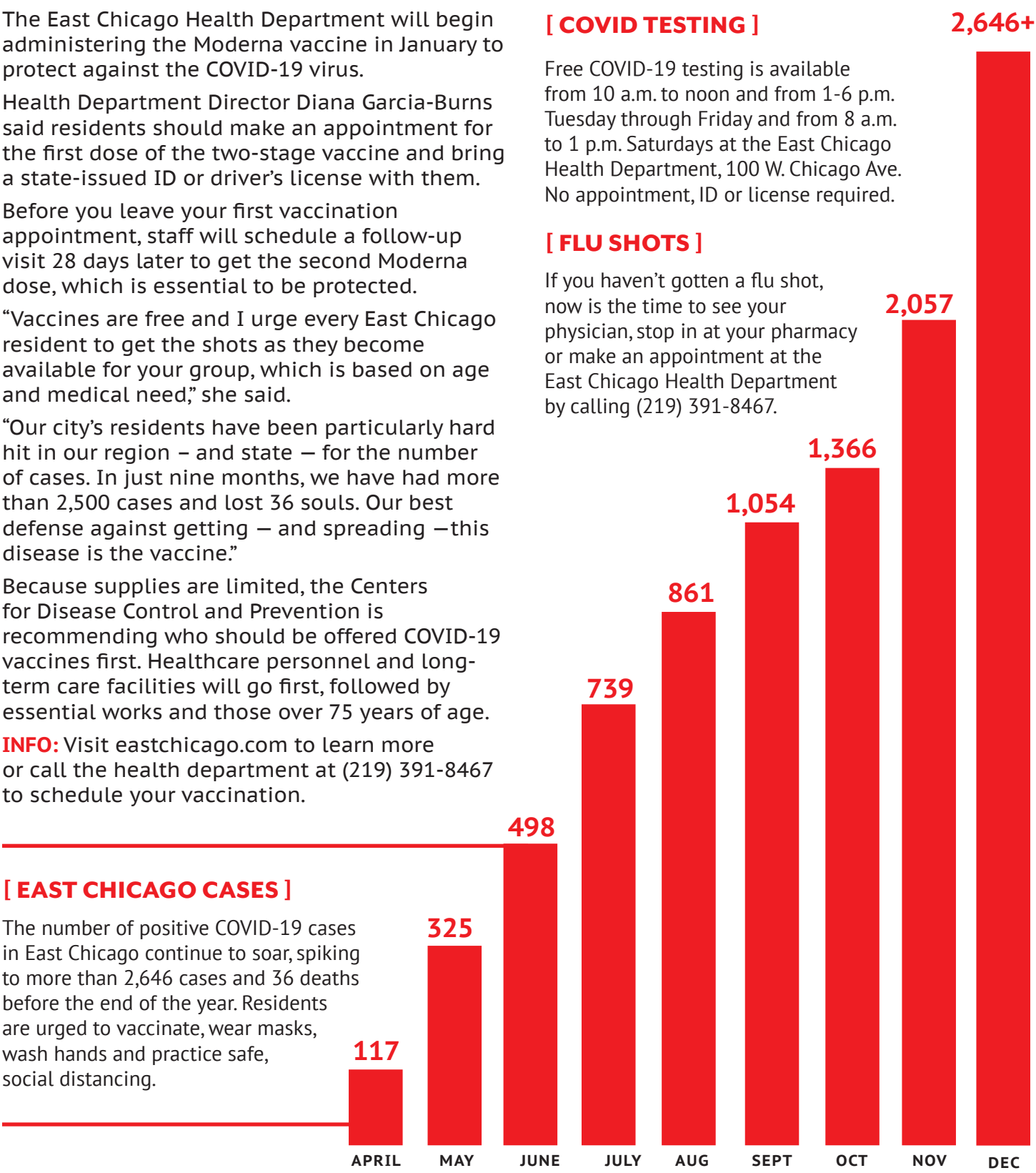
Free COVID-19 testing is available from 10 a.m. to noon and from 1-6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays at the East Chicago Health Department, 100 W. Chicago Ave. No appointment, ID or license required.

[FLU SHOTS]

If you haven't gotten a flu shot, now is the time to see your physician, stop in at your pharmacy or make an appointment at the East Chicago Health Department by calling (219) 391-8467.

[EAST CHICAGO CASES]

The number of positive COVID-19 cases in East Chicago continue to soar, spiking to more than 2,646 cases and 36 deaths before the end of the year. Residents are urged to vaccinate, wear masks, wash hands and practice safe, social distancing.





[ABOUT THE SCAM]

The East Chicago Police Department has received several reports of fraud. The victim's personal information – such as name, date of birth and social security number – is being used to file for unemployment as a result of the COVID-19 crisis with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

If you are a victim of a fraudulent unemployment claim, Police Chief Hector Rosario asks that you contact the East Chicago Police Department at the non-emergency number – (219) 660-0000 – to file a report.

After filing a report with the East Chicago Police Department, residents are urged to follow the steps shown here to file a report with the State Police and other crime-fighting agencies.

[WHAT YOU SHOULD DO NOW]

- **Indiana State Police**: Download a report at www.in.gov/dwd/files/ISP-UI-Fraud-Report.pdf and email uifraud@isp.IN.gov.
- If you are employed, contact **your employer's human resources** department so that they can protest your claim with Department of Workforce Development.
- File a report with the **Federal Trade Commission** at www.ftc.gov
- File an Identity Theft Affidavit – **IRS** form 14039 – through www.irs.gov
- Notify the **credit bureaus** – Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion.
- The **FBI** urges victims to report fraudulent activities to the **Internet Crime Complaint Center** at www.ic3.gov. You may consult identitytheft.gov for help in reporting and recovering from identity theft.
- File an identity theft complaint with the **Indiana Attorney General's Office** at www.in.gov/attorneygeneral/2895.htm or by calling (800) 382-5516.

SNOW OR ICE: WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!

Long before the first flake falls, Public Works Director Keith Selvie is well into snow mode – planning for the first, fifth, even seventh big snow of a season that packs a punch.

By November, Selvie and his road crews have prepared for the unknown – purchasing 5,000 tons of road salt – while prepping plows for the job ahead.

Snow removal is activated by a National Weather Service Advisory or notification from East Chicago police. First out the door are a minimum of 14 plows that target major roads.

"When we get the advisory, we begin applying beet juice to main thorough-fares, roundabouts and bridges," Selvie said. "Beet juice is operational at lower temperatures than road salt alone and can last for two to five days."

Selvie loves the job – even its unpre-dictability. "Since I've been here – even with the influence of Lake Michigan to enhance our snowfalls – we have never had to shut the city down," he said.

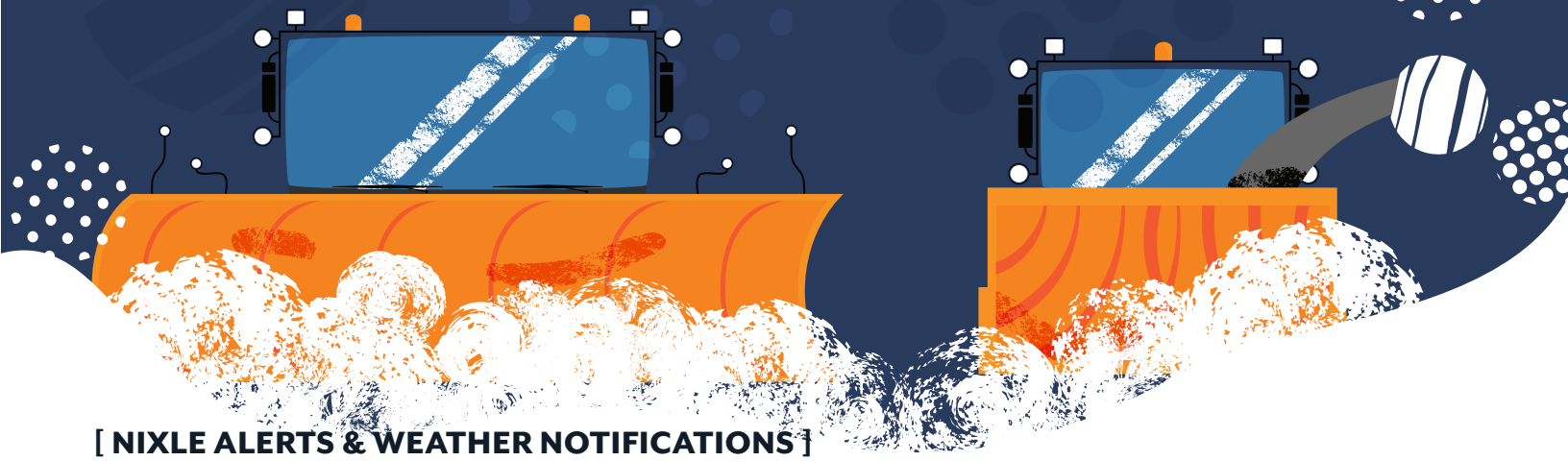
"We work until the job is done and then prepare for the weather that is going to hit us next."

QUESTIONS? Please call the East Chicago Public Works Department at (219) 391-8463.

[PLOWING STREETS]

Public Works Director Keith Selvie has created a priority system for snow removal, which takes into consideration public safety and efficiency. Streets are cleared in the following order:

1. The most heavily traveled roads are the highest priority, including Kennedy, Main, Guthrie, Michigan, Cardinal and Euclid.
2. Roads surrounding St. Catherine Hospital.
3. Streets by schools.
4. Police and fire stations along with Jeorse Circle.
5. Finally, we direct our efforts to the city's six residential districts beginning with the name streets followed by the numbered streets.



[NIXLE ALERTS & WEATHER NOTIFICATIONS]

Whether it's severe weather, snow-packed streets, road closures or boil orders, East Chicago's Nixle alert system has all the info you need. Don't delay! Sign up today for this communication tool that keeps you informed — wherever you are. Text ECEVENTS to 888777 or register at nixle.com.









7 NEW OFFICERS JOIN EAST CHICAGO POLICE FORCE

Police Chief Hector Rosario is celebrating 2021 with seven new police officers and high hopes to fill the remaining positions yet this year.

Sworn in on Dec. 8 were Israel Rivera, Jose Roman and Breon Walker, who came to East Chicago from the Indiana Northwest Police Department. A week later, Louis Angel Gonzalez, Gustavo Garcia Jr, Henry Brennan Georgas and Alejandra Marie Bolanos became sworn officers of the East Chicago Police Department.

Police Chief Hector Rosario said vacancies — while once rare — are a product of the times.

The National Police Foundation reported in 2020 that 86 percent of departments nationwide were experiencing shortages. It was an issue made worse by 2020.

"We are slowly losing officers to retirement. I was on a video conference with 50 other chiefs in Indiana who are all experiencing officer shortages," Rosario said. "The men and women we hire now have challenges in the profession I never experienced."

Like other departments looking to attract officers from neighboring cities and towns, East Chicago now offers attractive incentive packages to lure seasoned officers.

CURBSIDE MARKET

Join us for our curbside market and get your share of locally grown produce from the East Chicago greenhouse as well as healthy food supplies from Catholic Charities.

When: 1-3 p.m. (or until supplies last) Jan. 21 and Feb. 18

Where: Parks & Recreation Office parking lot, 1615 142nd Street

Info: eastchicago.com

INDOOR RECREATION

The gyms and fitness centers are open at Heritage Hall and Unity Center to all non-contact sports. The gym is limited to 15 people at a time while the fitness centers require appointments. Masks are required.

When: Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sundays.

Where: Unity Center, 3623 Guthrie St., (219) 397-2392 and Heritage Hall, 4506 Tod Ave., (219) 391-8380.

CANCELLATIONS & CLOSURES

All special events have been canceled or postponed until further notice. Likewise, the ice-skating rink at MacArthur Golf Course will be closed this year out of an extreme abundance of caution amid the COVID-19 crisis.

Information: Visit the city's website – eastchicago.com – for the latest updates.

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
4525 INDIANAPOLIS BOULEVARD
EAST CHICAGO, IN 46312

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Gary, IN
PERMIT # 121

RESIDENT
EAST CHICAGO, INDIANA 46312



WE ARE HIRING

• Code Enforcement Officer • Medical Assistant •
• Labor Foreman • Parks & Recreation Administrative Intern •
• Planning Department Administrative Intern •
• Registered Nurse •
• Vehicle Maintenance Administrative Intern •
• Water Distribution System Laborer •

APPLY AT EASTCHICAGO.COM/JOBS