[FIRE DEPARTMENT]

Mayor Anthony Copeland tapped veteran firefighter Damon Carpenter as the city's new fire chief,. During his first year, Carpenter hired four firefighters and completed more then $185,000 in firehouse improvements, including:

- Central Station flooring, LED lights for apparatus floor and a new generator
- New cascade system
- Command box for 2509
- Training room renovation
- Conference room furniture
- Particulate-blocking Nomex hoods, straight stream nozzle for truck, vehicle stabilization tools

[CODE ENFORCEMENT]

It was a banner year for the team responsible for keeping structures up to code in 2021.

Code Enforcement Manager Damien Ventura said collaboration with police, public works and city court have made all four more successful.

"The more effective they are – we are – and vice versa. We have found tools we didn't know we had," Ventura said. "They are assisting our efforts."

The Real Estate Public Nuisance Ordinance is one such tool. Introduced by Mayor Anthony Copeland in 2013, the ordinance allows the city to target properties deemed a public nuisance and fine landlords found to be in violation. The effort is so successful, Ventura said it's being replicated in other cities.

2021 by the numbers: Total inspections were up nearly 25 percent with 4,783 of those inspections considered closed. There was a 113 percent increase in the number of citations written. The 388 citations issued resulted in $21,756 in fines collected, which was $10,000 more than the city collected in 2020. East Chicago topped all Lake County communities in 2021 when it came to property liens because of weeds: levying $38,547, nearly four times that of Merrillville and 2.5 times that of Lake Station.



[POLICE DEPARTMENT]

East Chicago Police took crime-fighting to the next level with additional officers, squad cars, license plate readers and cameras throughout the city as well as new programs and initiatives.

"We are doing everything we can to squelch crime and allow every resident in the city to enjoy their neighborhoods," Police Chief Hector Rosario said. "Response has been awesome. People in our neighborhoods are looking for peace. They want the same quality of life we all do."

- **New Street Crime Unit:** Officers assigned to this detail have no set schedules or location – by design. Patrol Cmdr. Justin Orange, who heads the task force, says the elite group of a dozen East Chicago police officers travels in teams, visiting criminal hot spots and areas notorious for gun violence and narcotics. "Criminals don't stay in one place and neither do we. Residents knew from the first day they saw a trail of East Chicago patrol cars heading to a hot spot that something good was happening," Orange said. "They're thrilled we are making their neighborhoods safer."
- **Bike Patrol Unit:** East Chicago Police Department added officers and equipment to beef up off-road patrols at parks and greenspaces.
- **New Command Center:** The dispatch center has been retrofitted as the city's Incident Command Center, a facility capable of coordinating emergency operations large and small.
- **New Police Cadet Program:** East Chicago Central and the police department launched a police cadet program for credit as part of the high school's Career and Technical Education curriculum.

SPRING CLEANUP

This year's citywide cleanup will be held from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 4 – May 14. Please see the schedule below for your district's dates.

DISTRICT SCHEDULE

District 1: April 4-8

District 6: April 11-15

District 2: April 18-22

District 4: April 25-29

District 5: May 2-6

District 3: May 9-13

TEAM UP & CLEAN UP

- Place large items in the alley for collection or curbside where alleys do not exist.
- Secure all items that may be blown away by the wind.
- Bag yard-waste materials and place at the curb.

All abandoned vehicles – as well as those with expired plates or parked in a "No Parking" zone – will be towed at the owner's expense.

Info: For more information or questions, please call (219) 391-8463 or (219) 391-8464.

RENTAL REGISTRATION

East Chicago requires landlords to register every occupied rental property. The cost is $5 per unit through April 15 and $105 per unit after April 15.

This annual registration is not optional. It's the law. You can register your properties at the Building Department, 4525 Indianapolis.

Info: Visit eastchicago.com for a complete list of essential documents.

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

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
EDDM
PAID
Gary, IN
PERMIT # 121

RESIDENT
EAST CHICAGO, INDIANA 46312



Arbor Day

Please join Mayor Anthony Copeland, the Student Conservation Association and Parks and Recreation in planting native trees at Nuñez Park - **in honor of Richard Morrisroe** - for his continued fight for equality and social justice as well as his dedication to the City of East Chicago!

10 AM - 2 PM FRIDAY
APRIL 29

WHERE: Nuñez Park is located at 3600 Deodor Street. Please check-in at the table underneath the pop-up tent!

WHAT TO BRING: Wear long pants and closed-toe shoes and please bring plenty of water to stay hydrated. Face masks are required to participate.

WHAT IS PROVIDED: All supplies are provided. Small working groups will be assigned and maintained throughout the planting for contact tracing purposes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Please call Vanessa Hernandez-Orange at (219) 391-8474
or email vhdezorange@eastchicago.com.

EAST CHICAGO life
YOUR LOCAL SOURCE FOR EAST CHICAGO NEWS AND EVENTS

STATE OF THE CITY

It was tremendous year for complex projects – just look at what we accomplished in 2021!

In East Chicago, we don't wait for the new year to begin planning for it. Midway through 2021, we already had a plan for 2022.

We have a seasoned administrative team that is in constant motion – planning all facets of every project and looking for what else we can do to make our city a better place.

We meet frequently for status updates and planning. Where we have a personnel need, we fill it.

Take 2021 as an example. We had more than a dozen complex projects in process. Each project required coordination between multiple departments and contractors.

I knew I needed the best Projects Coordinator around and put a high priority on finding one. As it turns out, I didn't have to look far.

I tapped Keith Selvie for the job. As Public Works Director, he was always ahead of the need. As Special Projects Coordinator, he goes above and beyond every day.

A born planner, Keith was our best resource when it came to getting Block Stadium completed. At the same time, he was working to get roads, utilities and amenities in place to make the new Prairie Crossing neighborhood shovel-ready for private developers.

He'll be the first one to tell you, though, he is just one piece of the puzzle.



The City of East Chicago works because the police department and code enforcement teamed up to reduce crime and blight at the same time.

It works because we have a team dedicated to making your lives and your neighborhoods better, to make East Chicago the best place it can be.

ANTHONY COPELAND
Mayor City of East Chicago

[HEALTH DEPARTMENT]

To say 2021 was a busy year for the East Chicago Health Department is the ultimate understatement. The COVID Team administered more than 9,475 tests and more than 7,601 vaccines. The emergence of Delta Variant, Omicron (BA.1) and Omicron (BA.2) around the Thanksgiving holidays put the team into overdrive to accommodate a surge that extended into this year. The department continues to keep abreast of the ever-changing health environment.

"I am proud of everyone in the department who took the responsibility to maintain public health seriously," Health Director Diana Garcia-Burns said. "That we were able to provide non-COVID services during the pandemic is a testament to their hard work and dedication." Here's a look at 2021 services:

- **Vital Records:** 2,374 birth certificates, ,812 death certificates, 14 paternity affidavits and 6 amendments.
- **Inspections:** 54 new businesses, 167 food inspections, 184 environmental inspections, 120 complaints addressed.
- **Nursing:** 421 clients served, 1,131 childhood immunizations administered – of those, 268 were COVID-19 vaccinations age 5-11.
- **Outreach:** COVID vaccines given at senior buildings, churches, schools, Salvation Army, summer event venues, homebound individuals and mobile pop-ups.
- **Animal Control:** 250 calls, 10 adoptions, 23 sent to rescue, 22 claimed and 5 tickets issued.





[REDEVELOPMENT]

Redevelopment Director Frank Rivera is committed to doing everything he can to help renters become homeowners. "It's the American Dream to own a house of your own," Rivera said. "We work to make that happen in East Chicago."

From unveiling plans to transform Calumet into tidy streets with inviting bungalows to working with other departments to create a real estate portal featuring fixer-uppers and move-in ready homes, the city is putting out the welcome mat to new residents.

- **Prairie Crossing:** Phase 1 began with appraisals on seven lots and values set for sale prices.
- **Roofing Program:** Two savvy homeowners tapped $10,000 in assistance to replace their roofs.
- **Rehabilitation Program:** The city worked with homeowners to complete 14 rehabs.
- **Property Sales:** The city recouped $302,000 in 2021 when it sold eight properties.
- **Down Payment Assistance Program:** The city provided 22 new homeowners with down payment assistance at a cost of $245,000.
- **Fitzsimmons Project:** With construction complete, installation of perimeter fencing began in 2021.
- **Lakeshore Manor:** Work continues to make Lakeshore Manor a reality. The plan: to replace the Nicosia Senior Housing high-rise with a series of low-rise buildings in North Harbor.
- **Galleria:** Construction is complete on the city's first business incubator at 3724 Main Street.
- **Calumet Homes:** The push is on to build a cluster of new homes to re-establish neighborhoods north of 151st Street west of Kennedy Avenue.

[BUILDING DEPARTMENT]

Every time a structure is demolished, Building Commissioner James Portalatin said it makes way for new projects that benefit East Chicago residents and the overall city tax base.

"To go from properties that have little-or-no taxable value to new homes and businesses that pay property taxes is good for all of us," he said. "Those tax collections help hire police officers and firefighters, maintain sewers and roads. The goal of the Building Department is to do our part to keep the city healthy."

- **Demolitions:** The department demolished more than one blighted structure a week in 2021 — including the Nicosia Building and 2001 Franklin, which were razed to make way for new housing.
- **West Calumet:** Soil borings were conducted to develop soil management plans in targeted areas of West Calumet to prepare for a cluster of new, affordable single-family homes.
- **Logistics Campus:** Missner Group began construction on a 249,000 square-foot building at 4400 Homerlee ideally located near major transportation corridors leading into Chicago.
- **Business Park:** Chrome LLC began construction of this 120,000 square-foot business park on 30 acres at 3444 Dickey Road and is courting tenants requiring heavy cranes and active rail lines.

[MULTIMEDIA]

During the height of the pandemic, it was the East Chicago Multimedia Department that found new ways to communicate important information to the public and integrate lines of communication into a robust source of news. A monthly program on WJOB helped keep residents in-the-know as did the city's TV portal and East Chicago Life! newsletter. Nixle alerts were put into service to alert residents to emergencies like water main breaks as well as community events, such as curbside food pantries. Multimedia played an important role in the development of the city's Real Estate portal, which launched last year.



[SANITARY DISTRICT]

With miles of leaky sewers buried out of site – many for more than 100 years – the Sanitary District has its work cut out for it. Add in the fact that the city's resources to replace and repair crumbling infrastructure are limited and the challenges are clearly apparent. Significant rain events in 2020 put Roxana as the neighborhood most in need of intervention. Significant work has continued over the last 18 months, including:

- **Roxana Project:** Phase I began with cleaning street drains and video-inspecting an estimated five miles of sanitary and storm sewer lines in the neighborhood looking for cracks and debris buildup. In Phase 2, a hydraulic study was conducted as part of the Roxana project to determine maximum water volume the existing sewers could handle. In Phase 3, the department repaired 18 broken sewer lines and drains, added sewer lines and wet wells, as determined necessary by the inspection and hydraulic study. Crews buttoned up the season by lining the sanitary line from Shell Street east across Indianapolis Boulevard and installing a new generator at Roxana pump station.
- **Alder Street Project:** As part of Phase 1, Sewer Department crews cleaned 8,000 linear feet of the Alder Street sewer line, removing 2,200 tons of debris as part of the ongoing project.
- **Indianapolis Boulevard Project:** During Phase 1, crews cleaned and video-inspected Indianapolis Boulevard from Columbus Drive to 150th Street.
- **Annual CSO Cleaning:** As part of ongoing maintenance, 25 percent of the city combined sewers were cleaned.

[WATER DEPARTMENT]

The East Chicago Water Department takes its responsibility – to guarantee fresh, safe water is available when and where it is needed – very seriously. They safeguard every drop of water that flows to homes and businesses from the moment it enters the crib far off the East Chicago beachfront through the treatment and testing process and into homes and water fountains, pools and sprinklers.

Those protections include safeguarding underground pipes from infiltration and replacing pipes containing hazardous connections that at one time contained lead. In 2021, the city completed the final phase of an $18 million Water Distribution Improvement Program that includes:

- **Lead Service Line Replacement:** By August, 615 lead service lines through Superfund Areas 2 and 3 were replaced. The average cost per house was $6,200.
- **Distribution System Repairs:** City crews performed more than 300 repairs on the water distribution system, including leaks and valve replacements.
- **Fire Hydrant Replacement Program:** The city replaced or repaired 30 inoperable fire hydrants, guaranteeing water is available to fight fires.
- **Geographic Information System Mapping:** East Chicago's GIS system now includes distribution related data to allow for maintaining easily accessible distribution data.

[MARINA & LAKEFRONT]

While the East Chicago lakefront, beach and amenities remained closed in 2021, Marina Director Natalie Adams said maintenance crews were hard at work, upgrading dock connections and replacing windows and screens.

In addition, the travel lift – responsible for safely moving all sail boats and motor boats longer than 32 feet – had a major overhaul. Installation of semiprivate fencing that began last spring at the beach – and stopped because of weather – will be completed this year.



[PARKS & RECREATION]

Upgrades at city parks took unexpected twists and turns in order to make East Chicago green spaces safer, cleaner and more fun. At MacArthur Golf Course, wildlife-safe lights were installed at the pond to deter geese and new obstacles were added to the miniature golf course. Other park additions include: electricity at all park shelters, a new fitness structure at Riley as well as new seating at Edward Valve and Marktown. That wasn't all. Here are the highlights:

- **Block Stadium:** A multi-year, $8 million renovation of the city's vintage baseball stadium was completed last fall, setting the stage for one or more baseball clubs to call the facility home.
- **Park Rangers:** For the first time in city history, East Chicago now has rangers that patrol the city's 17 parks and keep them safe. They report vandalism as well as violations of park rules.
- **Kenny Lofton Mural:** The home of East Chicago Harbor Little League for 52 years has been named in honor of our very own Kenny Lofton and $10,000 invested in a mural that is a tribute to him and an inspiration to city youth.
- **MacArthur Golf Course:** The greens are ready for spring thanks to comprehensive upgrades and repairs at the main gate as well as one of the bridges inside the park. Cost: $45,000.
- **Soccer Fields:** The growing popularity of youth soccer led Parks and Recreation to invest $55,000 in fields at Marktown and Todd Parks.
- **Virtual Programming:** Implemented virtual arts and craft classes for senior and youth as well as family bingo and a workout program.