



Mishawaka Communicator



Working together to build the “Best Hometown in America” by delivering exceptional services, promoting safe and clean neighborhoods, elevating the quality of life, and inspiring pride in our community.

Mishawaka, Indiana

Dave Wood, Mayor

April 2011

A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood

Dear Friends and Neighbors,



Mishawaka City government exists to provide service to our citizens and to deliver the best services possible while operating as efficiently as possible. A common theme that I have written about in the Communicator is my goal and expectation that the City of Mishawaka will deliver world-class service. One department that I believe strives to provide that high level of service is the Mishawaka Fire Department (MFD). It is my sincere hope that you never need to utilize the services of the MFD, including the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division. But should an emergency arise, I can assure you that you are in good hands with our emergency response team. The management team of the MFD is constantly looking for ways to improve service and make our department more efficient.

The Mishawaka Fire Department responded to nearly 6,000 emergency calls in 2010, up over 750 calls from 2009. Nearly 80% of those 9-1-1 calls were medically related. By contrast, only about 1.35% of the emergency calls involved an actual fire. Mishawaka’s Fire Department, like most others in the area, are staffed and structured to respond to major fires. Certainly we want to be prepared in the event of a major fire, and we are, but with the vast majority of our run volume being medical in nature, we must manage the increasing volume of medical calls while not allowing service to slip to our citizens. Typically, the MFD would have two ambulances on duty, each staffed with two paramedic/EMT-firefighters and housed out of a centrally located station on Mishawaka Avenue, next to Central Park. As you could imagine, those two ambulances and their crews were running nearly non-stop, resulting in slower response times or worse, the inability to respond to calls at all, not to mention the wear and tear on our paramedics and equipment. In fact there were 210 occasions in 2010 where neighboring departments had to step in and provide emergency care for the citizens of Mishawaka when our crews were busy on other calls. While we are grateful for the assistance, these occasions came at the cost of longer response

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Welcoming Spring Exercise

Every month, the Communicator will provide a monthly series of articles for our Let's Move Mishawaka Program about healthy eating and lifestyles provided by Saint Joseph Physician Network, courtesy of Dr. Dale Deardorff, Medical Director.

It’s time for all of us to get outside again after the long winter. With the constant snow cover of this last winter, it was difficult to get those walks in. Now, with Daylight Savings Time and warmer temperatures, we feel the urge to get moving.

The following are a few tips for these transition months:

1. Always walk or run facing traffic on the same side of the street. It improves your ability to see the oncoming vehicles and to respond quickly, if necessary, with evasive action.
2. Always wear reflective clothes and light colors so that you are visible to the oncoming traffic. As drivers we have all come upon a runner or walker or cyclist in dark clothing during twilight and had to swerve at the last second to avoid a collision.

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Spring Reminders from Code Enforcement

The reminders below are just a few offered to help keep Mishawaka looking great. You can find more tips on our website:

www.mishawaka.in.gov

- Trash needs to be bagged, placed in containers and placed in your proper trash pick-up area not more than 24-hours prior to your trash pickup day.
- Cut or fallen brush should be cleaned up and tied in bundles or put in bags for regular pick-up.
- Property owners are responsible for mowing and maintaining the tree lawn between the sidewalk and curb and also any grassy areas that abut the alleyways.
- Vehicles kept on private property need to be properly plated and operable or stored in a garage if not.
- Yards should be raked and trash removed.
- Remember, spring is the time to start painting and sprucing up garages and houses. Preventive maintenance is the best kind.

Those owning rental property in Mishawaka must send in their 2011 Smoke Detector Forms. If you need a form they are available on our website or you can contact the Code Enforcement Department. 258-1612

A Letter From Mayor Dave Wood (continued)

times and reduced service. That is simply not acceptable to me. I have witnessed our first responders in action and I am extremely confident in their ability to provide professional and exceptional medical care to our citizens.

For these reasons, I announced on March 15th that the Mishawaka Fire Department would deploy a third ambulance on a permanent basis. We have also changed the locations where we dispatch our ambulances from. Now, ambulances will be dispatched from three locations rather than just one as was the practice in the past. Every second is critical when responding to emergency medical calls. This move should result in decreased response times, increased patient care, and better overall service to the citizens of Mishawaka. Ambulances will now be dispatched from the following firehouses: Station 1 at 600 South Union Street, Station 2 at 2332 North Main Street, and Station 5 at 333 E. Mishawaka Avenue.

Since the merger of the Emergency Medical Services Department and the Fire Department in 2002, the City of Mishawaka has spent thousands of hours training its firefighters to perform both fire and EMS duties. To staff the third ambulance in service, we are utilizing the expertise of our existing firefighters on duty. We will run three-man crews on the engines at each of our firehouses rather than four-man crews. Neighboring communities also utilize 3-man engine companies. This means that we will be sending 22 firefighters, a rescue truck and large multi-function ladder (Quint) trucks to a working structure fire while leaving one Engine Company and one ambulance available for any other calls. Fires will still be fought by as many firefighters as we currently dispatch. If there is a major fire, we will still get there with all of the assets and personnel that the city has always brought to a fire. We also have agreements in place with neighboring communities to provide mutual aid in the event of major emergency. The number of firefighters has not changed; it is just the truck that they get there on that has changed.

I believe that the addition of the third ambulance is necessary and essential to provide the level of service that you, our citizens deserve. We are grateful to the men and women of the Mishawaka Fire Department for embracing these changes and setting another great example of how our Mishawaka employees are providing world-class service to our citizens.



Welcoming Spring Exercise (continued)

3. Cyclists should ride on the same side of the street with traffic. They also need to remember to obey the traffic laws (i.e. stop at stops and follow traffic light directions)
4. Both cyclists and runners/walkers should plan their route to maximize their safety and avoid routes without sidewalks (runners/walkers), narrow streets with no room for evasive action and always watch for people exiting parked cars. Of course people exiting cars need to watch for cyclists/bikers and runners as well.
5. Watch for uneven surfaces. They are common after the winter's harsh treatment of our infrastructure. Sidewalks can heave and the pot holes are a problem and potential hazard. Watch for hidden obstacles inside those snow banks. They may hide objects that won't give when you jump!
6. Moving from the treadmill inside to the outside is harder than it seems. Your pace will be different outdoors and you should be prepared that your 2-3 mile walk or run will take longer during the transition phase. Stretching prior to exercise has been recently reexamined with no firm advantages found. But, it is always a good idea to be limber and to stretch whether prior to the activity, after the activity or just some-time during the day.

Remember, Mishawaka has many conveniently located parks for your use. Please get out and enjoy them and be safe with your exercise during this transition to Spring.

LET'S
MOVE
MISHAWAKA!



Tip of the Month

If you've been living an unhealthy lifestyle for a long time, the challenge of healthy living can seem daunting. Instead of trying to change everything at once and getting overwhelmed, make sustainable changes gradually.



Visit our new web site at ww.Mishawaka.IN.Gov

Send your questions, comments, or concerns to communicator_feedback@mishawaka.in.gov