



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.

Dave Wood, Mayor

www.mishawaka.in.gov

October 2012

A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood



There are many things happening in the City of Mishawaka in the Month of October, but a main focus for our City is Fire Prevention/Safety Month. The Mishawaka Fire Department is focused year-round on fire safety, but in the month of October each year, there are many events which take place to further promote this important issue.

One program implemented each year, The Fire Safety Obstacle Course, is hosted by Fire Prevention Chief, Jim Schuster and Steve Govorko, a physical education teacher at Walt Disney School. Developed by the two in order to generate awareness related to fire safety at the elementary school level, the program involves a number of different obstacles which students may encounter in a fire situation. The program provides opportunities to use personal senses, physical skills and judgment when encountering a fire either at school or home. The Fire Safety Obstacle Course is part of an awareness campaign to provide safe and secure schools and provide fire safety knowledge to all elementary school students. It involves 9-12 specific obstacle stations in which students learn to maneuver stop, drop and roll including a variety of fire safety initiatives from exit paths, climbing, door safety, conditions and hazards. This is a hands-on training that will have a life-long impact on students. Each year, fire safety is improving in homes, businesses and schools. The goal is to create awareness related to fire safety and reduce accidents by creating student



(l to r): Steve Govorko, Mayor Dave Wood, and Fire Prevention Chief, Jim Schuster with one of the obstacles from the Fire Safety Obstacle Course.

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Take Control of Stress Today!

Tips to manage stress from Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center

A little bit of tension can be motivating. But everyone has a point at which stress turns into distress. When you reach this stress threshold, your emotions can begin to harm your health. Here are some tips to manage your stress:

Sleep on it. When you're tired, you're more susceptible to stress. But 20 percent of Americans get less than six hours of sleep per night, according to the National Sleep Foundation. If a racing mind often keeps you awake, writing down any to-do items or thoughts can take the worries out of your head and lead to better rest.

Get active. Exercising on a regular basis can do more than just help you get in shape. It can help you cope with stress and release tension and energy. Physical activity also releases mood-boosting chemicals in your brain. Experts recommend 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week. Try taking a brisk walk on your lunch break.

Breathe easy. When you're feeling stressed, your breathing speeds up and becomes shallow. As a result, your heart rate and blood pressure increase, and you may feel anxious or have a headache. By taking a few minutes to breathe properly, you can short-circuit this reaction and lessen your anxiety. Here's how:

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Halloween Fun



Oct 29 - "Ghoul's & Goodies"
Battell Center 5-7pm

Children 6 & under can trick or treat, in costume, safely within the building. Snacks will be provided. Admission is free with a non-perishable food donation is encouraged. Contact Mishawaka Parks at 574.258.1664 for more info.

Oct 31 - "Trick or Treat"
Hours for trick or treating within the city will be 5-7pm.

Upcoming Events!

Battell Center Auditorium

Nov. 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, & 17

"Singin' & Dancin' Into The Holidays"

Preshow: 7:30 pm
Showtime: 8:00 pm

Dec. 6, 7 - 7:00 pm

"The Little Mermaid"

Dec. 16 - 3:00 pm

"A Christmas Concert"

A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood (continued)

and family awareness. Each year this Obstacle Course is featured in 2-3 schools. This year it will be visiting Walt Disney School and Emmons School and will be taught to at least 40 classes.

Another program being utilized in our schools are unannounced Fire Drills. These drills actually test the schools on their fire preparedness by timing the drill and making sure that every student is accounted for. These are done at every school in the City of Mishawaka from Elementary to High School.

There are also programs that make sure smoke alarms are supplied to senior and low income residents in the City of Mishawaka who may otherwise not be able to afford them, as well as programs that teach Fire Safety and Prevention to senior citizens and retirees in Assisted Living Centers and other retirement facilities. According to Fire Prevention Chief, Jim Schuster, "Education is the 'key' to Fire Prevention and Safety for all ages."

Following are some simple tips that could potentially save your life or the life of a loved one. Pass this list on to your friends and family and make this Fire Prevention/Safety Month count!

- 1) **Smoke Alarms** — install on every level of your home and test monthly.
- 2) **Prevent Electrical Fires** — don't overload circuits or extension cords. Don't run cords or wires under rugs or in high traffic areas.
- 3) **Keep Plugs Safe** — unplug appliances when not in use. If a plug overheats, smells strange, shorts out or sparks, shut the appliance off and repair or replace it immediately.
- 4) **Alternate Heaters** — inspect chimneys annually and use fire screens in fireplaces. Keep combustibles a minimum of 3' from any portable heat source.
- 5) **Fire Safety Sprinklers** — greatly increase your chances of survival when used with working smoke detectors.
- 6) **Create an Escape Route** — practice your escape plan with your family. Stay low to the floor and check for hot doors using the back of your hand.
- 7) **Position Appliances Carefully** — Keep TV's and other appliances away from windows & curtains which can spread a fire quickly.
- 8) **Clean Dryer Vents** — clean the lint filter before each dryer load. Ensure the exhaust duct is made of metal, not plastic or foil. Clean duct twice each year
- 9) **Be Careful Around the Holidays** — check holiday lights for exposed or frayed wiring. Keep them away from anything that can easily catch fire.
- 10) **Conduct Regular Inspections** — check all of your electronic equipment and wiring once a month.

Mayor Paul



Take Control of Stress Today! (continued)

- Lying or sitting comfortably, place one hand on your belly and the other hand on your chest.
- Inhale through your nose and feel the hand on your belly rise. The hand on your chest should barely move.
- Exhale slowly, feeling the hand on your belly descend.

Tense to relax. Stress is often written all over your body: Your brow is furrowed, your lips are pursed, your shoulders are up by your ears, and your back is hunched. Using a method called progressive relaxation helps release tension throughout your body, inducing a more relaxed state. You can practice this technique by tensing one muscle group at a time for ten seconds and then letting it go. If you're pressed for time, try this quickie version that tackles all muscle groups at once:

- Sit or lie comfortably.
- Clench both fists, bend both arms, tense your biceps and legs, close your eyes, scrunch your face, bring your shoulders up to your ears and tense your stomach muscles.
- Hold for about five seconds and then release, letting go of the tension and allowing all of your muscles to go limp. As you do this, keep the idea of relaxation in the forefront of your mind.

Rely on friends. Make sure you have a strong support system of friends and family who can help you when you're stressed. Talking with someone you trust about your stress can help you work through it. Without the support of others, stress can be even worse.

Remember, you can't tackle everything at once. If you take things one task at a time, one day at a time, you'll see progress and feel less stress.