



# 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](http://www.mishawaka.in.gov)

July 2018

## A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood



### The Village Green Dispute: A Case Study in Good Government

While examples of bad government are plenty and well publicized, it seems as though examples of good government are becoming rare and do not get the publicity they deserve. This is but one reason for the lack of trust in government and the current state of political discourse. I believe that more effort and emphasis should be made to seek out, document, share and celebrate examples of good government wherever they exist. As such, I'd like to point out one recent example where compassion, patience, persistence, communication, skillful navigating of the legal process and shrewd negotiation led to a successful resolution of several long months of conflict that had the potential to displace hundreds of people from their homes with impact similar to that of a natural disaster. The situation was the Village Green mobile home community utilities billing dispute.

The dispute received some basic media attention, with more emphasis spent looking for salacious stories rather than giving a thorough examination of the facts. Most of the reporting and subsequent editorial comments not only lacked the depth to understand and explain the issue well, but also served no useful purpose to any of the parties involved and could very well have been counterproductive to the solution. Reporting completely glossed over and misrepresented the constant engagement and communication that was involved in bringing the situation to a successful conclusion. I would like to share with you my perspective on how this unique situation was successfully resolved.

From the beginning, the City of Mishawaka and its wholly owned, non-profit utility company, Mishawaka Utilities' priorities were twofold; to keep Village Green residents in their homes with uninterrupted water service and to collect all money owed to Mishawaka Utilities for utility services rendered to the Village Green community. The paramount goal was keeping Village Green Mishawaka citizens in their homes throughout the dispute. The dispute was between the Village Green owners and Mishawaka Utilities, not the residents of Village Green who were the innocent bystanders that paid their utilities bills to the Village Green owners like most honest rate payers would. We at the City were very sympathetic to their plight and shared as much information with them as we legally could.

Likewise, it was our fiduciary duty to collect all funds for utilities used. As I said, Mishawaka Utilities operates as a nonprofit, rate payer-owned utility company. All rate funds collected for utilities used go right back into operations and maintenance of the water department. If a large customer fails to

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## Knowing If You Have High Cholesterol Could Save Your Life

*Health Information from Saint Joseph Health System*

Nearly one in three American adults has high cholesterol, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Nearly two out of three adults with high LDL (bad) cholesterol don't have their condition under control. Too much cholesterol puts you at risk for heart disease and stroke, two leading causes of death in the U.S. Even though common and deadly, these diseases are preventable.

High cholesterol has no signs or symptoms, so the only way to know if you have it is to get your cholesterol checked. Your doctor can do a simple blood test to check your cholesterol levels. The test is called a lipoprotein profile. It measures several kinds of cholesterol as well as triglycerides, a fat found in the blood that can play a role in cardiovascular disease. Talk to your primary care provider about how you can manage your cholesterol levels and lower your risk.

If you have high cholesterol, your doctor may prescribe medications and suggest lifestyle changes, such as healthy eating and exercise. For example, trans fat found in fried and processed foods such as cookies and donuts can raise LDL cholesterol, contributing to heart disease and stroke. Avoiding them can help you stay healthy. Eat a healthy diet that is low in salt and low in total fat, saturated

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jun 30 - Men's Metro Golf Tournament  
(Eberhart-Petro)
- Jul 7-8 Men's Metro Golf Tournament  
(Eberhart-Petro)
- Jul 11 Kids Garbage Open  
(Eberhart-Petro)
- Jul 14 Fam-to-Fam Sale  
(Battell Center)
- Jul 25 Brunch and a Movie "Roman Holiday"  
(Battell Center)
- Jul 27 Movie in the Park "Despicable Me 3"  
(Hillis Hans Park)
- Jul 28 21+ Beach Bash  
(Merrifield Complex)
- Aug 8 Chill With A Cop  
(Central Park)
- Aug 10 Dive-in Movie "Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs"  
(Merrifield Pool)
- Aug 17 Trivia Night (21+)  
(Battell Center)
- Aug 25 A Night for our Stars, All-Inclusive Dance  
(Battell Center)
- Aug 27 Harvest Dance  
(Battell Park Bandshell)

### ONLINE ACCESS

-  <http://mishawaka.in.gov>
-  <http://facebook.com/cityofmishawaka>
-  <http://mishawaka.in.gov/communicator>
-  <http://mishawaka.in.gov/parksandrecreation>
-  <https://twitter.com/MishawakaMayor>
-  <https://instagram.com/MishawakaMayor/>

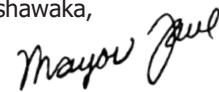
## A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood *(continued)*

pay for a long period of time, it has the potential to negatively impact the department's ability to maintain the overall system and provide service. It also means that the remaining rate payers might have to fill the gap through a potential rate increase to pick up the slack for what was not being paid by Village Green owners. Neither were acceptable options.

Throughout the conflict, our options were limited. We tried to enforce our policies while we were forced to defend legal action, continue dialog with the owners of the park and develop contingency plans in the event of shut off. Complicating matters were that Village Green owns the park's water distribution system, and they directly meter and bill their residents. They buy water in bulk from Mishawaka Utilities for distribution to their residents. While many suggested that Mishawaka take over the distribution system, we had no legal right or ability to take over their water system and bill residents directly. We could not force payment nor could we continue to provide utilities for free in perpetuity. Mishawaka Utilities is audited by the State Board of Accounts and must follow our approved policies. We did utilize any and all means at our disposal and even some creative ones. Our persistence, patience and strategy paid off. Through tough negotiation, Mishawaka Utilities reached an agreement to keep utilities on, residents in their homes and the utility company made whole with all bills and late fees paid in full. Since the agreement was reached between the park owners and Mishawaka Utilities, all outstanding balances have been paid.

At the end of this long process, government did its job and did it well in my opinion. All the right outcomes happened as a result. I'd like to personally thank our talented team that brought this situation to a successful resolution lead by the City's Corporation Council, Geoff Spiess and also included Mishawaka Utilities General Manager, Jim Schrader, City Attorney, John Roggeman and Mishawaka Utilities attorney, Dave Bent. These fine public servants worked tirelessly and dedicated a vast amount of time to achieve our objectives while seeing to it that Village Green residents' lives were not negatively impacted. I'm proud of their efforts and I'm honored to work with them.

Yours in Mishawaka,



### Know Your Numbers...High Cholesterol *(cont.)* *Health Information from Saint Joseph Health System*

fat and cholesterol while rich in fresh fruits and vegetables. Take at least one brisk, 10-minute walk three times a day, five days a week.

Controlling LDL cholesterol is the primary focus of treatment. Your treatment plan will depend on your current LDL level and risk for heart disease and stroke. Your risk for heart disease and stroke depends on other risk factors, including high blood pressure, smoking status, age, HDL level, and family history of early heart disease. In addition, people with existing cardiovascular disease or diabetes are at high risk for high cholesterol.

Find out if you have high cholesterol by scheduling an appointment with your primary care provider.

### Fitness Court Open!!

Check out the new Fitness Court located in Central Park. Download the free app and take the challenge!

<http://nationalfitnesscampaign.com>

### 2018 Summer Concert Series

Family-friendly concerts held at the Battell Park Bandshell, Central Park, Merrifield Park, and at Eberhart-Petro Golf Course on the Clubhouse Deck.

<http://mishawaka.in.gov/parks/summer-concert-series>

### WASTEWATER OPERATORS PLACE THIRD OVERALL AT IWEA COMPETITION

In nearly every field, professionals compete to show their competence, strive to win awards, and become more knowledgeable about their jobs. Wastewater treatment professionals are no different. Every year wastewater professionals from all over the State of Indiana participate in a competition that matches wits and skills.

This year, the Indiana Water Environment Association's Wastewater Operator's Challenge was held on May 22 in Shelbyville, Indiana. Teams competed in categories of Operations & Maintenance, Safety, Laboratory, Collection System, and Residuals. Mishawaka's team consisted of Lindsay Grossman, Ray Rankin, Cristina Vigil, and Mike Kubisiak.

Mishawaka's team, named the Mishawaka Ninja Turdles, placed first in Operations & Maintenance, first in the Laboratory competition, and placed third overall in the competition.

Congratulation to all team members.

