



# 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)

March 2019

## A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood



### What constitutes a State of Emergency based on weather?

The old saying is if you don't like the weather in Northern Indiana, wait a minute and it will change. That has certainly been the case this winter. After a very cold November, we experienced a mild December and January. Then, like a freight train from the North Pole, we got hit with a cold spell in early February where temperatures plummeted and flirted with the all-time record low temperature ever recorded here. Weather prediction has become higher tech, if not more accurate. The days of the "local weatherman" predicting weather with a magic marker and marker board on television has given way to highly trained meteorologists using advanced computer models in a 24-hour news cycle. That combined with instant access to weather information and radar on your cell phone means that weather events get more news coverage (and hype) than ever before. The constant attention that significant weather events receive generally result in people being better prepared. Recently, I even witnessed my local grocery store being busier than I had ever seen following a prediction for a few inches of snow that caused a run on the basics like bread, milk and water. The new tendency is for people to stock up and hunker down.

Relative to the City, we are better prepared than ever before to handle winter weather and snow. Modern technology has greatly improved our ability to respond to whatever Mother Nature throws at us. We have equipment that allows us to pretreat roads by spraying a brine solution in advance of snow events. We have purpose-built plow trucks with laser guided snow blades that allow one truck to act as two. We have GPS that allows us to greatly improve the efficiency of our routes and better salt conveyers that allow us to salt more streets with less material. Our goal is always to clear snow from curb to curb within 24 hours of the end of the snow event. It's hard to imagine a snow event that would overwhelm our ability to respond, but should it happen, we even have a

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### Make Comfort Foods Healthier!

*Health Information from Saint Joseph Health System*

Comfort foods can elevate your mood and relieve stress, as well as provide essential nutrients. But if you're worried that your favorite dishes may not be healthy enough, then consider ways you can modify them to reduce fat and calories or add nutritional value.

**Change the cooking preparation** – Instead of deep-frying, try air-frying, oven-baking or roasting to reduce the amount of fat and calories.

**Swap out the oil in baked goods** – Use pureed pumpkin or applesauce to keep a muffin or cake moist without the added fat.

**Get creamy without the cream** – Replace heavy cream with evaporated milk to make a delicious cream sauce for pasta or other dishes. Use plain Greek yogurt instead of sour cream in dishes or on baked potatoes. It packs protein without all the fat.

**Add vegetables** – Add broccoli to your macaroni and cheese for additional nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and fiber. Spiralize zucchini or try spaghetti squash instead of traditional spaghetti noodles to add vitamins, minerals and fiber while reducing carbohydrates to your pasta dishes.

To learn more, visit [ThisCounts.org](http://ThisCounts.org)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Mar 14 Winter Concert  
"HiFi2WiFi"  
(Battell Center)
- Mar 16 Decades Dance (50's)  
(Battell Center)
- Mar 25 State of the City  
Address  
(Battell Center - 7pm)
- Apr 9 Grandparent and Me  
"Animal April"  
(Battell Center)
- Apr 14 Easter Egg Hunt  
(Central Park)
- Apr 18 Winter Concert  
"Elephant Rescue  
Band"  
(Battell Center)
- Apr 19 Good Friday - City  
Offices Closed
- Apr 20 Best Disc Doubles  
Tournament  
(George Wilson Park)
- May 3 Beutter Bridge Ball  
(Beutter Park)
- May 27 Memorial Day Kids  
Dash  
(Battell Park)

### Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Free tax prep & e-filing assistance for working families and individuals in St. Joseph County.

**CALL 2-1-1 to schedule your appointment**

### 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)*

vehicle that can be used to get supplies anywhere in the city or can assist in rescuing anyone trapped if our conventional vehicles can't get there.

Despite the City responding to weather better than ever before, there are more snow days off than there ever used to be. I tend to be a little old school when it comes to the weather. Growing up here in the Princess City, I don't recall too many snow days except for the Blizzard of '78 when we were out for one week. I certainly don't remember times when the City, businesses, and shops closed because of cold temperatures. But I recognize that times are changing and it's better to be safe than sorry.

Recently, as the temperature dipped, most schools and many businesses closed. I received many questions and comments, particularly on social media, wondering about a State of Emergency. While the City joined with the County and other neighboring cities to issue a "Travelers Advisory" recommending people stay indoors and off the streets, the City of Mishawaka did not declare a State of Emergency. We asked that our citizens and businesses exercise common sense and take extreme care and caution in their decision-making process and we strongly encouraged people to stay indoors. Simply put, the City had no mechanism to declare an emergency solely based on the temperature outside.

"States of Emergency" are different. Emergencies exist to keep people off streets in the event of natural or man-made disasters in order that emergency responders can do their jobs. In a true State of Emergency, you can be ticketed for driving. In this case, there was no functional limitation that served as an obstacle to our emergency responders. Even with the presence of dangerous cold, it did not rise to the level of an emergency. In this case, I have no power or authority to order businesses to close based on temperature. My philosophy is that it is our job at the City to make sure our streets are cleared so that schools, businesses, and citizens can determine for themselves whether they should close or if they should venture out.

Closing everything in a true State of Emergency has serious ramifications. Some businesses simply shouldn't close. Some are essential and must remain open for public health and safety. Some employees and businesses are vital to provide critical services that we all depend on, whether it is a hospital, assisted living facility, a pharmacy, or even the HVAC company out performing services on furnaces. All of these are even more important when it gets extremely cold.

Beyond the obvious needs, some small mom-and-pop businesses can't afford to close because they depend on the revenue. Some colleges, while they may cancel class, still have thousands of mouths to feed on their campuses and depend on their food workers to report and operate their dining halls. Likewise, many employees work for hourly wages and depend on work to pay necessities and can't afford to have automatic unpaid days off due to cold temperatures. Some people also depend on gas stations and grocery stores to be open no matter the conditions. Then, what if Mishawaka declared an emergency but Elkhart did not and a person who lives in Mishawaka must go to work in Elkhart?

You can surely see that this is not as simple as one might think and that there would be many unintended consequences of a simple action to declare an emergency for the purpose of closing everything down. Frankly, in my opinion, it is not local government's job to limit your freedom to make common sense decisions.

During the polar vortex, we found that most businesses and employers demonstrated good judgment. Many closed but those that remained open appeared to be flexible with staff who couldn't come to work for various reasons. The City of Mishawaka government remained open and we stood ready to respond to whatever call came in. It is my belief, in times such as those, our critical services are needed most. Unlike other levels of government, we do not close, and we are here ready to serve. Our services, such as Police, Fire, EMS, Street Department, Water, Electric, etc., are essential and the most impactful on our citizens' day-to-day lives.

Fortunately, there were no major incidents that required a City response and the City weathered the cold spell very well. Again, we are prepared, trained, and equipped for virtually any event, and you can have confidence that our Mishawaka public servants are up to the challenge. I sleep well at night knowing that our staff is on the job!

Yours in Mishawaka,



### 2019 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Presented by  
Mayor David A. Wood

March 25, 2019 - 7PM  
Battell Center Auditorium