



President's Corner  
June 2020

The health and welfare of the members of our community are always primary factors in the Board's and staff's deliberations and actions. The events of the past few months have highlighted our commitment to safeguarding these principles, and our community is to be commended in following public health guidelines to keep the greatest number of residents safe from COVID-19 infection.

As you probably know, on May 29 the State of Illinois moved into Phase 3 of Governor Pritzker's Restore Illinois plan. Phase 3 includes the re-opening of restaurants (outdoor seating only), personal care services (such as nail salons, spas, hair salons), retail shops, and health and fitness centers (for personal training and outdoor fitness classes of up to ten people). The library is offering curbside service and the pool plans to open in mid-June with limited capacity. State parks have re-opened and non-essential gatherings of ten or fewer people are also permitted. In all instances, face coverings are required when effective distancing cannot be maintained.

We welcome the summer weather and with it the ability to expand outdoor seating to accommodate al fresco dining at our restaurants. We're happy to see our retail stores open their doors to customers once again. It's heart-warming to see residents enjoying the amenities our quaint shopping district provides.

While we methodically return to a semblance of pre-COVID-19 normalcy, experts urge continued diligence with respect to maintaining social distancing, practicing good hand hygiene, and wearing masks to reduce the risk to yourself and those around you. The virus will continue to be a significant part of our reality for many months to come.

The Village is maintaining regular operations and services, but the lobby of Village Hall remains closed to the public. Please conduct your business with the Village by phone, email, or by using the drop box outside the main entrance. Residents can stay informed and access other local, state and federal resources by following the COVID-19 page of the Village website, at: <https://wsprings.com/563/Covid-19-Information>.

The Recreation Department has been closely following guidelines from IDPH and the State, with respect to potential summer programming. Some of the programs will run this summer – either virtually or with adaptations to adhere to the guidelines – but many are cancelled. For the most up-to-date information on Recreation programming, please visit their page on the Village website at: <https://wsprings.com/199/Recreation>.

Moving to Phase 4 requires:

1. The COVID-19 positivity rate remains under 20 percent and that rate does not increase by more than 10 percentage points over a 14-day period;
2. Stability or decrease in COVID-19 hospital admissions for 28 days;
3. Wide-spread testing available in the region;
4. Contact tracing and monitoring with 24 hours of a positive diagnosis for more than 90% of cases in the region; and
5. Available surge capacity of at least 14 percent of ventilators and ICU, medical, and surgical beds. IDPH will closely monitor data and feedback from local health departments to determine when each region can advance to Phase 4, the earliest possible date being June 26.

Conversely, a region can slide back to the previous phase of Restore Illinois with a significant outbreak, a sustained rise in the positivity rate, or a sustained increase in hospital admissions leading to a reduction in hospital capacity that can threaten surge capacities. Currently, our region continues to advance toward Phase 4, this may change due to recent events and the flouting of public health guidelines.

In the wake of widespread public outcry following George Floyd's murder, Village leadership has redoubled efforts to protect the safety of our residents, businesses, and the entire community. Unfortunately, peaceful rallies have been overshadowed by violent and criminal acts that undermine and dilute the original message to address systemic inequities in order to achieve lasting reform. Of course, the right to assemble is a fundamental right guaranteed by the Constitution, and I support those seeking to correct social injustices through peaceful demonstrations. We will not, however, tolerate looting, rioting, and vandalism in Western Springs.

Out of an abundance of caution, precautions have been taken to ensure the safety of our community throughout this period of unrest. Police officers are working overtime to enhance their presence in the community. The Western Springs Department of Law Enforcement Services is part of a larger, regional mutual aid organization that will readily assist one another should that be required. Chief Budds maintains constant communication with neighboring Chiefs, and is closely following developments in Chicago and the entire region. Our men and women in uniform stand ready to protect us, our homes, and our businesses, if necessary.

Help us to help you. If you have not already done so, please take the time to register for the new Rave/Smart911 emergency notification program. More information is available at: <https://il-westernsprings2.civicplus.com/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=1698> Also, stay informed by signing up to receive new flashes directly from the Village (via text or email) at: <https://il-westernsprings2.civicplus.com/list.aspx>. We continue to be grateful to our first responders and all of those who are on the front lines of these crises.

Together, we will get through this.