



# Town of Cicero

Response to the July 2nd Flood

# Office of Town President

## Larry Dominick



- Worked with representatives of the State of Illinois and Cook County to secure Emergency Declarations, which were issued and will qualify victims of the flooding to receive support.
- Worked with Cook County officials to identify programs to provide funding (grants/loans) for residents who are in desperate need.
- Created an Online Damage Assessment Report which has accumulated nearly 7,000 completed forms with photographs and specific data which can be presented to the State and County to qualify residents for support.
- Supervised the Town's widespread efforts to respond to the Flooding, utilizing every Department and all employees. Ensured that departments have employees available 24/7 to respond to emergency and health-related needs for residents.



# Office of Town President Larry Dominick



- 6,650+ Flood Damage Reports Compiled
  - Over \$200 million in estimated home damages
  - 125,000+ automated phone notifications
  - 25,000+ email newsletters
  - 50,000+ unique website visitors
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- Secured after-flood support from major national agencies such as the Red Cross and other agencies to provide services and supplies directly to residents at Town organized events.



# Water Department

- Employees were working 24/7 to respond to resident needs.
- The Water & Sewer Department is going to ramp up its sewer cleaning and video inspections. Lido has recently approved a proposal submitted by National Power Rodding for sewer cleaning and video inspection for sewers on Cicero Avenue – Roosevelt Road to 16th Street & 19th Street to Cermak Road. This sewer cleaning and televising work will be ongoing.
- Supplemented their rodding of sewer lines by hiring outside contractors to expedite the removal of rainwater from homes where the rainwater did not properly drain after the floods receded.
- Rodded out 3 miles of streets; cleaned out 20 car/gutter boxes (sewers along the curbs); rebuilt three major catch basins that collapsed after the flooding; installed new catch basins in some areas; rodded out more than 100 homes that needed assistance.
- Making resident checks to ensure individuals are safe in flooded areas and properties



# Fire Department

- The Cicero Fire Department responded to 309 calls during their 24-hour shift on Sunday, July 2, 2023.
- This is 10X the normal call volume during a normal 24-hour period.
- The Fire Chief was requested to assist in allocating resources at approximately 12:20 pm. This was right after the Town of Cicero activated its Emergency Operations Center. The FD had its 3 Fire Engines, 2 Fire Trucks, & 3 ambulances all in use running calls during the heavy rains and flooding. Over half of the 309 calls that the FD went on were for flooded basements that posed electrical hazards as well. The 8 Fire apparatus vehicles manned a total of 21 Firefighter personnel that day. There were multiple calls from motorists that were stranded either in or on top of their vehicles, especially in the viaduct areas. Many families needed to be relocated due to uninhabitable conditions.



# Fire Department (continued)

- A large portion of our calls for service were for flooded basements. A flooded basement may cause many issues, including electrical hazards. The other main problem of flooding is natural gas hazards. When the pilot light of a furnace goes out, it is critical to shut down the structure's gas supply. Our crews performed this at hundreds of homes.
- The Department also responded to numerous Fire Alarms, both commercial and residential, that were activated by the heavy rains. Fortunately, these turned out to be false alarms, but the number of alarms we responded to added to the already overwhelming call volume.
- Due to the amount of 911 calls we were receiving, additional dispatchers were brought in to field phone calls. During a large-scale incident, ensuring every call is answered and addressed is critical.



# Fire Department (continued)

In addition to the above-mentioned call types, the Cicero Fire Department also responded to...

- 4 separate water rescues for people who were trapped in their vehicles under viaducts. The 6 people rescued in these incidents were unharmed.
- 3 separate water rescues for individuals trapped in their basements.
- 3 separate incidents for disabled residents needing assistance in vacating their property.

While managing the numerous flood-related calls, the Department needed to maintain EMS services for medical emergencies. Fall victims, heart attacks, and vehicle accidents were all handled promptly, despite the additional challenges the Department faced.



# Police Department

- Activated the Town of Cicero Emergency Operations Center. Managed the closure of portions of 10 major thoroughfares including Austin Blvd, Central, Ogden, and Laramie.
- Prioritized emergency and safety calls. All personnel were utilized to manage flood response and preserve safety on a 24/7 basis.
- The 911 Center reported an 823 percent increase in calls with responses averaging between 10 seconds and 40 seconds.
- Provided personnel to assist in management and safety for flood-related events including the Damage Assessment Report collections at five different Town sites; coordinated the July 18 Public Hearing, board meetings, and Red Cross giveaway on July 22.
- Continued to provide emergency response for all emergency calls.





# Cicero Senior Center

- Dozens of volunteers provided assistance in completing Damage Assessment Reports each day, as well as translation services.
- Assisted Seniors in assessing damage and completing Reports.
- Distributed information to seniors on available services for support.
- Contacting and Bringing organizations such as Team Rubicon and the Grundy County COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster) to assist home residents affected by flooding in removing debris, furniture, damaged wall, and flooring from their basements at no cost.
- Assisting seniors to sign up with the above organization to remove hazardous items and help reduce health risks by exposure to hazardous air contaminants
- Conducting health checks on Seniors.



# Cicero Health Department

- The Health Department has a full-time back of volunteers fielding dozens of health-related inquiries every day from residents regarding potential health problems from the flooding.
- Connecting residents in need with agencies that provide food and clothing including the Salvation Army and the Catholic Charities
- Providing contacts for residents who are having financial difficulties in obtaining Rental Assistance to pay their rent/mortgage.
- Provided volunteers to assist in filling our damage Assessment forms.

## Clerk's Office

- Coordinating with Social Service agencies such as the Red Cross and Salvation Army to provide assistance to needy individuals. Staff have been working 24/7 to respond to resident needs



# Public Works Department

- Employees were working 24/7 to clear alleys of bulk waste. The amount of tonnage of waste has been nearly three times what is normally collected during normal waste removal. By July 5th, Public Works removed 1900 tons of garbage that were picked up. Crews worked continuously to relieve the pressure on homeowners. In a normal week, we take 750 tons.
- The cleanup effort has been supplemented with trucks from Cook County and several contracted by the Town to assist in the removal of the bulk waste from the flooding.



# **Mental Health Department - General Assistance**

- The Mental Health/General Assistance department has been actively referring residents to Beds Plus, an agency assisting in rental/mortgage assistance to residents affected by the flooding. About 30 families have been referred. The department has also been involved in coordinating an event with the Red Cross for this weekend July 22nd. I am also waiting on a flyer from Beds Plus with information and requirements to apply for the assistance, so it can be passed out this weekend since this agency is unable to attend the event.

## **Special Events Department**

- Coordinating distribution of post-flood cleanup and hygiene products through events such as the July 22 Town of Cicero/Red Cross community assistance day at Cicero Community Park.
- Coordinated 100 volunteers and CSOs to assist families in receiving necessary relief. (Provided food and water to volunteers during their service periods.)



# Collectors Office

- Suspended street maintenance ticketing for residents through July 23
- Assisting residents to complete Damage Assessment forms

