

Good afternoon residents!

This is your Mayor again with more updates and more information for some city issues that we all have been facing, together. In this week's video we will discuss the Little Calumet River chemical spill, Willowcreek Road, an update to Fallen Timbers road project, weather updates and the recent pre-approval of the Route 20 to Indiana Tollway reconstruction funding.

As your Mayor I received word this past Thursday about a chemical spill into our local Little Calumet River. Saddened to hear this news, I immediately made my way to our lake shore and found that many fish had already succumbed to the effects of the chemicals. Another unfortunate finding was the fact that many state officials, including the IDEM (Indiana Department of Environmental Management), had learned of these horrific events on Monday of last week. Yes, it is true that our office did not receive word of the spill until 3 days after the

first reported incident. I find this to be unacceptable. After conversation with local IDEM workers, who were already at work to remove fish from the lake inlet, I immediately began work as well to figure out a way to help rectify this even; and to find a way to ensure this does not occur again. This was very dis-heartening to myself, to each of the residents impacted by this news, and to learn of these catastrophes the way I did; through mismanagement and miscommunication. Beginning work on conversation with IDEM, DNR and National Dunes Park the responsible party for the spill was found. ArcelorMittal steel had leaked excessive amounts, with total amounts unknown, of Cyanide and Ammonia into the waterway. ArcelorMittal accepted full responsibility for this catastrophic event. Upon conversation with their management, ArcelorMittal will strive to ensure that future events, like this, do not occur again. I as Mayor of Portage will also ensure that our water ways are kept clean, and free from toxic chemicals; By honest, open and transparent conversation with all entities involved at the lake front. I am calling for the IDEM, DNR,

National Park Dunes and ArcelorMittal to remain in constant open contact, and help residents feel more at ease in using our beach fronts and water. There is only one way issues like this resolve, and do not occur again. That is by each of these entities consistently remaining in transparent conversation. Resident's should also rest assured that drinking water provided by Indiana American Water is continuously monitored and remains safe to consume. Indiana American Water has, as a precaution only, restricted its water intake by the filtration plant as a precaution. The local beaches do remain closed based off this information as well. I will not let this issue fall through any cracks, and promise to push for answers to why, and how this will NOT happen again. Follow this event on social media closely for updates regarding the matter.

Next, Willowcreek Road. The project currently stands 4 weeks ahead of schedule. A BIG thank you to the individuals who are out on the streets working daily and working efficiently. The road work has yes, been

cumbersome and inconvenient, however it will be over very soon.

Hang in there!

Fallen Timbers. A long project, however, a highly needed project.

Many residents have been displaced from parking and driving due to the project. However, like Willowcreek, it is making progress. Officials tell me that this project will near completion by mid-October and with most essential work done by mid-September. I am asking the residents to continue giving patience to this project as it nears completion. More updates to come later this month.

Recent rains had impacted the roadways and residents of Portage. As asked in previous statements, we encourage residents when heavy rains occur to help clean out the top of storm water drains to allow for the free passage of water. Most residents are back with power now, and again I encourage residents who are impacted by power outages to call NIPSCO and only call emergency personnel in the event of a true

emergency such as downed power lines or other immediate life-threatening problems.

The last update we will cover is regarding some exciting news. In discussion with NIRPC regarding the area of Route 20 to the Indiana Toll Road inlet, we have been granted a certificate that is the starting process to receiving Federal funding for the reconstruction of this corridor. It is essential to the development of the area, and is in great need of resurfacing. This process has just started, and as updates are received, with my plan of transparency, you- the resident- will be first to know of these developments.

In final thoughts for today, a quote from Shimon Peres, "I learned that public service is a privilege that must be based on moral foundations."

Have a great week! Take care, and God bless!