



President's Corner
March 2020
Covid-19 Update

As the Village President, a daughter of elderly parents, and a parent, there is nothing more important to me than the health and well-being of our community. The Village is closely monitoring the spread of Coronavirus, which is an ever-evolving situation. I, along with Village staff, have been receiving advice from health experts as well as updates on guidelines to prepare for Coronavirus in our Village.

To date, there are no known or suspected Coronavirus cases in the Village of Western Springs. Nonetheless, the Village takes the Coronavirus threat very seriously. We have adopted extraordinary community mitigation strategies to protect the health and safety of the Western Springs community, including:

- All events at the Recreational Center, Senior Center, and Grand Avenue Community Center are cancelled, effective March 16. Programs are tentatively scheduled to resume on Tuesday, April 7. Please check the Village website for updates as that date may change. While closed, all recreational facilities will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
 - The library, public and private schools, and many other local programs are also closed/cancelled. Please check other entities' websites for specific information.
 - The Recreation Center will be open for voting on Tuesday, March 17. Extra steps will be taken to help reduce risk.
- Village Hall will continue operations, however, beyond the lobby, the building will be closed to the public, beginning March 17. The walk-up kiosk will not provide services at this time. When possible, conduct business with the Village online or by phone, or use the lobby drop-box, available during business hours. My weekly office hours will be suspended during this time.
- Our first responders are equipped and ready to assist residents. Regional protocols are in place to ensure individual EMS departments will meet the challenge should a community outbreak occur.
- Internal operations have been assessed and an emergency plan adopted to address emergency departmental staffing, if needed, so that services to residents continue uninterrupted.
- The Village website will continue to be a source of the most recent and credible public health information as it becomes available.
- The Village Board will postpone all non-essential meetings for the near future. For essential meetings, the Board is required by law to have a quorum of members physically present in order to conduct business. Out of an abundance of caution, and to the best of our ability, we will take extra measures to clean all facilities prior to a meeting. For public meetings, we

will make accommodations so that written comments may be pre-submitted to the Village in advance of the meeting, which will then be read into the record.

- At its meeting on March 16, the Board will consider the adoption of a State of Emergency Ordinance that will authorize the President and Village Manager to act swiftly to supplement local resources as needed to resolve an emergency.

As the virus spreads, fear naturally spreads with it. We are right to be concerned and we all should follow CDC guidelines to keep ourselves, our loved ones, and the public healthy and safe. *Prepare, take precautions, but don't panic.* Check the facts before spreading rumors and causing undue alarm. By all means call your doctor if you think you have the virus, but it is our responsibility to minimize the impact on our health care facilities so they are not overwhelmed and may continue to provide quality care to the most vulnerable members of our community.

Information on Coronavirus, or COVID-19, suggests that most illnesses are mild, with flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease, are at a higher risk for serious complications. Children do not appear to be at an elevated risk. The virus spreads easily from person-to-person and the President and Governor have declared the COVID-19 pandemic a national and state emergency, respectively.

Both the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) websites are excellent resources for information and updates on COVID-19. Please refer to those websites at www.CDC.gov/COVID19 or <http://www.dph.illinois.gov> for more information on keeping yourself and your family healthy. If you prefer to discuss your concerns with a public health official, contact the CDC at 1(800)232-4630 or the IDPH at 1(800)899-3931. For local information, go to www.wsprings.com/covid19.

An important part of this strategy to limit the spread of the virus is staying home. If your students are returning from college or studying abroad where COVID-19 is prevalent, self-quarantine for two weeks. Do your shopping at non-peak hours to avoid crowds. Small changes can make big differences. As we socially distance ourselves from friends and neighbors, please think of those folks you know who may need extra help during these uncertain times. A friendly phone call or email to check in can be vital. If you receive no response and are concerned, call the non-emergency number at 708-246-8540, and the police will make a well-being check.

While our dine-in restaurants and bars will be temporarily closed beginning Tuesday, March 17, per Governor Pritzker's orders, consider buying a gift card from a local business for future use, or order take-out or delivery, to help sustain our local businesses through this period of uncertainty.

Together, we can manage this challenging time.

Alice Gallagher,
Village President