

July 17, 2020

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STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHTS



In Times of Crisis, It's All Hands on Deck

After a rigorous week-long effort, the extraordinary amount of storm debris produced by the July 9 microburst has been cleared from impacted neighborhoods in Elgin. This storm produced a similar amount of debris as microbursts experienced in recent years, however, last week's storm impacted a much more concentrated area of the city, requiring extra resources and time to remove debris.

But just how much damage was there? Superintendent of Parks and Facilities Greg Hulke estimates 700 trees were damaged, some full tree failures, but most with downed branches. The largest tree that fell was a Catalpa tree at Old Main, approximately 40 inches in diameter and 40 feet tall. Luckily, many of the damaged trees can simply have the storm damaged areas trimmed over time. Others require removal.

The initial response last Thursday evening and into the weekend focused on public safety issues, particularly with downed wires, and downed trees and branches on wires or blocking streets or driveways. Safety issues aside, many neighbors were out in full force to get any manageable debris out of the streets, sidewalks and driveways.

"While we sure had our work cut out for us, it was amazing to see so many neighbors out helping one another," said Public Works Superintendent Aaron Neal.

The most heavily impacted areas of the City were the near west and near east sides. In order to manage the massive amount of storm debris, extra resources were needed to assist the Forestry's departments 6-person

crew.

"A total of 12 independent crews made up of 61 City staff members from various public works, utilities and parks and recreation division as well as the City's tree service contractor were organized," said Neal. "Crews were assigned to various tasks including parkway brush removal, technical aerial removal and life safety issues."

Those 61 staff members don't account for the superintendents and crew leaders from public works and parks and recreation responsible for response logistics, such as ensuring resource availability, daily progress reports, future planning and delegation of work and areas of assignment. It also doesn't account for the 911 and 311 operators or staff from the police department, fire department and city manager's office that assisted with communications and on-site response efforts to manage safety concerns.



"A microburst produces so much damage in such a short amount of time," said Fire Chief Robb Cagann who oversees the City's office of emergency operations. "This is one of those events that requires strategic coordination and collaboration of several departments."

The first 12 hours after the microburst yielded over 300 calls to emergency communications and over 100 requests for service to 311. But that was just the start. In the days that followed, 311 received an additional 363 requests for forestry service. All week, the 12 dedicated crews continued efforts collecting bulk items, like large branches or trees needing special equipment for removal. To assist residents in the community clean up, crews collected both public and private debris that was brought to the curb. When responding to 311 requests, this assistance often meant going back to parts of neighborhoods where cleanup was already complete.

"The Elgin community has been very patient and understanding of the enormous task the City faced following the storm," said Neighborhood Services Manager for 311 Jennie Phillips. "We received so many calls and messages to thank staff for helping resolving issues in a kind, professional and quick manner."



Today, those efforts conclude, with the entire city having been swept for debris, and various divisions of staff returning to their usual duties. While we anticipate that there will still be some brush in various neighborhoods, the forestry division is well equipped to handle any incoming 311 requests, canvas neighborhoods and collect any remaining brush without additional resources.

"The forestry, public works, utilities and land management crews really worked hard and long hours to get all of the debris removed as fast as they did," said Hulke. "I'm very impressed with their resilience. It was amazing teamwork all around."



[Read July 10 News Release: Elgin Responds to Damaging Storm](#)



Storm debris was hauled out of neighborhoods to the City's property adjacent to 600 S. State Street. This drone footage shows the amount of debris collected as of Tuesday, July 14. Additional debris has since been collected.

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES & PRIORITIES

CORE VALUES

COLLABORATION

DIVERSITY AND
INCLUSION

DEFINED GOALS

CITY OF CHOICE

COOPERATION



INCLUSION



HIGH PERFORMING,
FINANCIALLY STABLE
GOVERNMENT

INNOVATION



STEWARDSHIP



SAFE AND HEALTHY
COMMUNITY



PROMOTIONS - CONGRATULATIONS!

Joel Valdez - PT Custodian to Crew Leader - Parks and Recreation

Lizzette Lara - Auxiliary Officer (EPD) to Bilingual Citizen Advocate (311) - Neighborhood Services

Jose Espinosa – Grounds Worker to Land Management Maintenance Technician - Parks and Recreation

Scott Holmes – Sergeant to Lieutenant - Elgin Police Department

Ed Schmidt – Equipment Operator to Cement Worker - Public Works

Mike Adams – Maintenance Technician to Land Management Crew Leader – Lords Park - Parks and Recreation

Rachel Rich - PT Seasonal Laborer to Land Management Grounds Worker - Parks and Recreation

Juan Sandoval - PT Janitor to Permanent PT Janitor - Parks and Recreation

NEW EMPLOYEES - WELCOME!

Travis Chinn - Firefighter - Elgin Fire Department

Joseph Michaels - Firefighter - Elgin Fire Department

Andrew Sciaky - Firefighter - Elgin Fire Department

Andrew Baeder - PT Seasonal Laborer - Parks and Recreation

Craig Kelly - PT Seasonal Laborer - Parks and Recreation

Carter Reynolds - PT Program Leader - Parks and Recreation

Sherri Martinez - PT Health/Fitness Desk Clerk - Parks and Recreation

Colin Harris - PT Cashier - Parks and Recreation

Joshua Lung - PT Facility Supervisor - Parks and Recreation

Shane McCoy - PT Cashier - Parks and Recreation

Albert Claps - PT Starter/Ranger - Parks and Recreation

Sharon OHara - PT Attendant – Club House - Parks and Recreation

Ronald Bellack - PT Attendant – Driving Range - Parks and Recreation

Harold Bishop - PT Pro Shop Attendant - Parks and Recreation

Tyler Bruns - PT Cart/Bag Attendant - Parks and Recreation

Patrick Burns - PT Starter/Ranger - Parks and Recreation

Lee Fisher - PT Pro Shop Attendant - Parks and Recreation

**This issue includes promotions and new employees since May 1, 2020.*

RECOGNITIONS

To: Julia Young Water

Re: Julie Young, Water

From: Joan Gronnert, resident

Mrs Gronnert called 311 to thank the City of Elgin for efforts to make adjustments for a water leak while she was out of town. She specifically wanted to extend her gratitude to Julie Young. The Dell Webb maintenance team also stated how professional Julie was and that she was really great to work with.

To: Police, Fire, Public Works

From: Kathy Carbine, resident

"Just wanted to extend my compliments to the City of Elgin, Police, Fire, Swat, Pete's Towing, etc., for the outstanding parade coming off Toastmaster Drive and Congdon this afternoon around 1:30 p.m. The noise level was tremendous and scared the poop out of me until I stood up and looked out the back windows to see what was happening, OUTSTANDING!!! I literally had tears in my eyes at the parade of vehicles coming off Toastmaster. Not sure what it was for, but most impressive!! Keep up the great community spirit!"

To: Jorge Alvarez, Community Development

From: Chris Melton, resident

Homeowner sent an email in appreciation of help with his deck: "Thank you it's been a pleasure working with you all!"

To: Police, Fire, Public Works

From: Cindy Miller, resident, via 311

Constituent calling to thank all involved in the parade for lifting up their spirits. She is proud to be an Elginite!

To: Tad Koeune

From: Anonymous caller

"...I do want to compliment the city maintenance crews on a job well done. I've worked in Elgin for 10 years but only moved here in 2018, partly because I was always impressed with how clean and efficient the streets are maintained in all weather."

To: Forestry, via 311

From: Paul Bednar, resident

Constituent on the 700 block of Douglas Avenue wanted to thank Forestry for newly planted trees.

To: Steve Whalen and Downtown Crew; Community Development

From: Paul Bednar, resident

Kudos to the city for doing a great job with the spring and summer flowers in downtown. Also, the houses that have been built on some city-owned lots in the historic districts have been perfect.

To: Public Works, Forestry, Land Management

From: Becky Belles Jones, resident

I just want to thank you so much for all your hard work in cleaning up after the storm last evening! You have all done such a quick and wonderful job!

To: Dan McNanna, Elgin Police Department

From: Ricky Galarza, resident

Shout out to the officer in car 865... helping someone change a tire in 90 degree heat !!'

To: Cindy Walden, Ron Sessions, Public health division

From: Mark Ebacher, Interstate Partners

Rick, I know your staff hustled and really supported Rookies in opening at The Grove. The ownership of that restaurant was very complimentary and appreciative of all your team did to allow them to open about one week ago (late May). Please pass those kind words on from the Rookies ownership. Cindy Walden, the Fire Department team (Ron Sessions) and Health Department all were cited by George as essential to getting started. Any calls that you made are also very much appreciated.

To: Elgin Police Department, Public Works

From: Cherian Jacob

I live in Bowes Creek Country Club. Yesterday, the LIGHT UP THE DAY parade include 26 vehicles, from the Elgin Police Department, the Public Works Dept, Tow Trucks, Bookmobile from Gail Borden Library and the Kane-McHenry Mobile Field Force.

I'm very appreciative of the time, effort & planning that these various departments undertook with the "Socially Distanced Parade Of Vehicles", which enabled the Bowes Creek residents to watch this amazing sight via the Porch or sidewalks!

Thank you to the various CITY OF ELGIN departments for connecting in a memorable way, with the residents of Elgin.

To: Cindy Walden, Community Development

From: Michelle Bach, resident

Hello Dave and Mark,

Hope this message finds you both well! As a City of Elgin resident I am taking the time today to contact you both because I wanted to share that I was very impressed with the service experience provided to me by Cindy Walden on Monday, July 13th.

I had attempted to make contact with two other City of Elgin employees who work in the building department and unfortunately did not receive any response from either to voice messages or emails sent to both of them with questions we needed addressed for our community. I made a third attempt to get some answers this past Monday, and when I was routed to someone's mailbox I figured that was also a dead end. Thankfully, the story had a different twist than I was prepared for based on my prior experiences. I was so surprised when I received a timely return call from Cindy Walden. Then to find that Cindy was so knowledgeable, helpful and willing to spend the time answering all of my questions in full, I was literally blown away! I feel that Cindy went above and beyond to provide an excellent service experience to me as a resident/taxpayer. Cindy is definitely a valuable employee for our City and I hope that you will acknowledge to her and your superiors that you received wonderful feedback about the

experience Cindy provided to a Homeowner from the Castle Creek of Elgin community! Please thank Cindy for her great work!

Thank you and kudos to Cindy for doing a great job!

To: Sandy Kolba, Community Development

From: Walter Beudette

Mr. Beudette called to share how professional and courteous Sandy was on the phone. He said, "Great job on providing 5 star service!"

He appreciated Sandy's kindness and compassion and was very appreciative of how understanding she was and willing to listen to him complain.

To: Jose Gonzalez and John Shales

From: Doug Bergdahl

I would like to give a shout out to Jose Gonzalez and John Shales for your assistance yesterday.

I was working with our Capital Project Contractor JNC installing a new valve, with vault, removing a cross and installing a tee. The work was being done in a very congested area on Liberty & Hastings, there were 3 open trenches in roadway.

I needed to access a valve vault, on Hastings, to make a tap so that testing could be performed upon completion of JNC's work.

The V.V. was full of debris, to say the least, a 60 plus year old narrow brick structure, with Concrete and Asphalt that had been dumped down into structure over the years of many repairs from road resurfacing.

I called Jose & John, they had been out performing service requests of their own and made time to help me. The three of us worked together to get concrete and debris broken up and removed from Vault so that what I needed to be done on the Water main could be done.

Thanks once again guys, I really appreciate it!

To: Forestry

From: Ernest Gross, resident

Thank you and your team for taking care of the large downed tree branch on Oakland Avenue so quickly.

To: Forestry

From: Neal Haufe, resident

Thank You to Public Works crews for excellent work trimming parkway tree this morning on Lincoln Avenue!

To: Forestry

From: James Proudian, resident

Thank you for the prompt response. They came the next morning and cleaned up well after they took the limb off.

To: Water Distribution

From: Ken and Carol Lucchesi, residents

I would like to tell you that the crew that worked on the water line in front of my home did a wonderful job. They worked hard and well together. They made sure the area was cleaned when they completed. Then they made sure we had water when they were done. Please make sure that they know that we appreciated all they did.

To: Forestry, via 311

From: Barbara Schloss, resident

Homeowner just called and he wanted to provide a huge thank you to the forestry crew. Everything looks better than before and the team just did an outstanding job at their home on Alfred - very impressed with your performance.

To: Forestry, via 311

From: Rudy Fausto, resident

After calling for concerns over tree health and requesting tree trimming, resident called to say the forestry staff on scene were very kind, nice and professional.

To: Caleb Dodge, Public Works, via 311

From: Sonja Gozy-Krause, resident

Resident called to thank you for your quick service on repairing the street light near their home.

To: Forestry, via 311

From: Kathleen and Edward Schroeder, residents

Resident from 500 block of Willis called to express her thanks for storm clean up early Saturday morning.

To: Forestry, via 311

From: Mike Melvin, resident

The forestry crew came by this a.m., assessed the issues I had, trimmed the tree, and during that process decided that both of these trees should be removed. They said this would be done at a later date, and that's fine, they cleaned up the area and left it cleaner than when they arrived! Thank you for the timely response and the time and effort involved!!

To: Traffic Maintenance Division, via 311

From: Dan Miller, resident

The children crossing sign at Gifford and Prairie was looking a little rough then it got graffiti on it. I told you folks and we got a new sign in a day or two. WOW! Great service. Thanks!

To: Forestry, via 311

From: Lee Plasmier, resident

Crew was very pleasant. A staff member also greeted him with a "good morning". As a senior he

appreciated the crews kindness.

To: Adam Langer, Forestry, via 311

From: Dawn Stringini, resident

After a tree was marked for removal, and resident wanted the tree saved if possible. The resident called to say, "Thank you very much for your time with explaining the circumstances with the resident."

To: Jennie Phillips, 311, Forestry, Public Works

From: Mallery Ave resident

Hi Jennie, Thank you very much for the assistance with the tree that was damaged during last Thursday's storm.

The forestry department and public works were out yesterday and took care of the tree and debris.

The tree ended up having a large area chewed out at the stump of the tree.

This was evident after they took the tree down.

Again a huge thank you to 311, forestry and public work departments.

My neighbor can now rest a little easier not worried about another branch/tree coming down on the power lines.

To: Forestry

From: Joseph Wonzy, Code Compliance

Thank you for all your hard work from Morgan St!

To: Elgin Police Department, Forestry, via 311

From: Linda Rezendes, resident

Linda called on behalf of her father David Rezendes who lives on Hill Ave. He wanted to call and say thank you, but he can't hear too well, so he asked her to do it for him. She is so grateful for what the city of Elgin has done for him. She said her father was so excited telling her about two great experiences with the City of Elgin. He said an officer came out on a well being check and the officer did an awesome job coming out to check up on him. With the current storm, there was a huge tree that came down in his yard and a group of guys came into his yard and dragged it out and took care of it for him. Daughter and father are so happy to live in Elgin and have great city workers that do care and look out for the Elgin residents.

To: Forestry, via 311

From: Kevin Granger, resident

Resident called to say "Thank you" for a job well done for clearing a large limb down on Miller Drive. Crew that was on scene were very polite and completed the job.

Share your story.

In late May, Mayor David Kaptain coordinated the donation of 4,800 face coverings to be distributed to senior citizens



in Elgin through Senior Services Associates, Inc. Pictured, Elgin police officers and firefighters provided the donation to Minnie Vasquez, Activity Director at Senior Services Associates, Inc. The photo and resulting news articles were well received and many seniors benefitted from the gesture.



We want to see and share your pictures and videos. They may be used on the City's social media channels, website and in other hiring and promotional materials. [Send us photos from your workday and we can help share your story.](#)

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



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