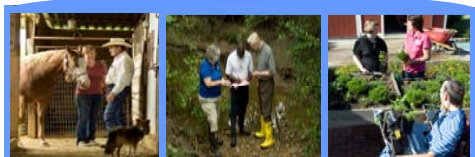


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Making a Difference In Tarrant County



Cover page: Celebrating 100 Years!

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2014 Centennial Celebration
1914-2014 • Celebrating 100 Years

In May 1914, the national Cooperative Extension Service was established by the Smith-Lever Act, which created a state-by-state network of educators who extend land-grant university knowledge and life skills to help people thrive and prosper. We honor our Tarrant County Commissioners Court who are and have been supportive of Extension since our first agent arrived in Tarrant County in 1914.



Left to right: The Honorable Roy Charles Brooks, Commissioner Pct. 1; The Honorable Andy Nguyen, Commissioner Pct. 2; The Honorable B. Glen Whitley, County Judge; The Honorable Gary Fickes, Commissioner Pct. 3 and The Honorable J.D. Johnson, Commissioner Pct. 4

Fire Ant Control in Pastures



Kenneth Johnson, Jr.
County Extension Agent -
Agriculture & NR



It has been widely reported that the large mounds created by fire ants damage pickups, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), shredders and hay equipment. Mounds cause horses to fall and riders to take bad spills. Other negative fire ant impacts include injury and loss to livestock and wildlife, infested feed and damaged electrical/telephone equipment. Carrying capacity of the ranch is reduced because cattle will not graze in and around fire ant mounds.

So what's a producer to do? Producers have to determine how fire ant infestations will affect the bottom line while homeowners worry about the ants stinging family members and guests, and the unsightly appearance of mounds on the front lawn.

Effective fire ant control requires a programmed approach, and pretreatment planning is an essential part. Annual economical losses caused by fire ants need to be calculated and compared with treatment costs. The cost of eliminating fire ants from an entire operation may not be justified by economic losses, particularly on large ranches. In this case, the better option is to identify and treat those areas only where control costs are justified. To control costs, fire ant management may be confined to high-traffic work areas, feedlots, hayfields and calving pastures. Treatments can be limited in lesser work areas, infrequent traffic locations and in the back pastures.

One cost-effective and environmentally friendly approach to manage fire ants is called the two-step method. This approach works best in fully infested areas of 20 or more mounds per acre and where there is little or no concern for preserving native ant species. Two-stepping includes broadcasting a bait insecticide over an entire area in the spring between late April to mid-June and in the fall between late August and mid-October. Remaining individual problem mounds are then treated with an approved drench, granule, bait or dust insecticide.



A hand-held seeder or spreader is ideal for broadcast treatments of lawns or other small areas around buildings or equipment. A low-volume applicator mounted on a tractor, the receiver hitch of a pickup truck or ATV is suited for pastures, hayfields and range less than 200 acres. For low-traffic areas, there are skip swath techniques for applying insect growth regulator baits. Two acres are covered with only enough bait for one acre by applying the material on every other swath.

Individual mound treatments, the second step in the two-step program, are generally considered the most labor-intensive and costly treatment methods and they give the shortest fire ant-free period. However, fast-acting methods are the most desirable in some situations, especially where preservation of native ant species such as red harvester ants and other competitor ant species is desired.

Check the pesticide label to ensure the product is registered for pasture use. Although there are many available fire ant bait products, only specific ones such as Extinguish Plus, Extinguish and Amdro Pro and Esteem can be applied around animals used for food production. Amdro Pro should not be confused with Amdro when making pasture applications. Under favorable conditions, fire ant colonies multiply rapidly and can eventually engulf the entire ranch. When they appear, it is important to initiate a control program that fits ranch operations.





Marian Ross, M. S.
County Extension Agent
Family and Consumer Sciences

Did you recently have a young person just graduate from high school or college? If so, they may have received money as a gift or even gift cards. Depending on the relationship, a young person could receive amounts from \$20-\$50 per person and feel like they just won the lottery.

However, before they “spend it all in one place”, take time to discuss with them “what’s next?” I know, a shopping spree would be more fun or treating ALL your friends to dinner would be a blast, reality is, having funds for going away to college or preparing for your first job after college graduation needs to be a time to stop, plan and prepare or save, spend, share.

For parents, this opens the door for you to help your young person understand the reality of what items cost and setting goals. This may be the beginning of a conversation of what you are willing (and not willing) to financially support during these transitions of life. Everybody needs to have an understanding of “what happens next.”

Talking with them about financial goals would also be helpful. The situations are very similar, however, what is about to happen is not.

A few suggestions (High School Graduate - College Bound):

- Decide how much they are going to spend on their needs for moving away;
- Consider putting some in a CD or Money Market Savings that can be used for their 2nd or 3rd year in college.
- Review costs of college and what each party will be responsible for.
 - ❖ High school - local college, vocational, military, not attending college
- What are the expectations while still living at home, financially...?
- Split into percentages so that they understand how to write goals:
 - ❖ 60% of gift dollars long term (CD or MMS)
 - ❖ 20% for short term goals or plans
 - ❖ 20% can be used at young person’s discretion
- Young people still need financial goals, so helping them set up their own account will work to your advantage to begin preparing for life on their own.

College Graduate ~

- Do they have a job they need to purchase appropriate clothing and shoes (flip flops are not professional dress)
- Do they need to use funds for moving or establishing their new place?
- Do they have a job for which they need to set money aside to use down the road?

No matter the age of your graduate, helping them to put together their financial future begins at home. Encouraging and teaching them to spend, share and save early in life will (hopefully) follow them into their future, build the foundation now. Congrats to all 2014 Graduates!

All Things Coconut

Darlene Myatt
Extension Agent -
Expanded Food & Nutrition
Education Program



Walk into any health store or even your local neighborhood market and you are likely to see coconut oil promoted as the latest food cure-all. Claims abound that coconut oil cures everything from poor immune function, thyroid and heart disease, to obesity, cancer and treatment of Alzheimer’s disease. However, not all of these claims have been substantiated by research.

So should you stock up on coconut oil? Let’s first review some of the facts...

- Coconut oil is made from the coconut fruit. Other examples of tropical oils include palm oil and palm kernel oil.
- The two main types of coconut oil used in cooking are:
 - ▶ “Virgin” coconut oil – extracted from the fruit of fresh mature coconuts without using chemicals or high temperatures. The type of coconut is considered *unrefined* and has a light, sweet, nutty flavor and aroma. It is often used for baking or sautéing at lower temperatures less than 350 degrees.
 - ▶ “Refined” coconut oil – made from dried coconut meat and often chemically bleached and deodorized. It lacks the sweet-nutty flavor of virgin coconut oil. Refined coconut is often used for baking or stir frying, or cooking at temperatures up to 425 degrees.
- Sometimes food manufacturers use a version of coconut oil that has been processed further to produce partially hydrogenated coconut oil which contains *trans* fat. For more heart-healthy food choices, remember to check the nutrition facts panel and limit consumption of *trans* fat as low as possible.
- In regard to nutritional composition, coconut oil is considered a solid fat. It is 92% saturated fat, which is higher than butter. With the exception of palm kernel oil, all other common culinary oils, including canola, corn, safflower, soybean, flaxseed and olive oil contain significantly less saturated fat than coconut oil. Because coconut oil is a plant-based food it does not contain cholesterol.

Many people believe that coconut oil may have positive health benefits even though it is high in saturated fat. Based on Harvard School of Public Health research findings, evidence that coconut oil is super-healthy is not convincing as these claims appear to be more testimonials than clinical evidence.

Neither the American Heart Association nor the 2010 Dietary Guidelines suggest that coconut oil is any better or preferable over other saturated fats. Coconut oil, like all saturated fats, should be limited to less than 10% of calories because it can increase the risk of heart disease. A more healthful option would be to replace these products with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats.

So the bottom line? Enjoy coconut oil if it is your preference, but do so in moderation until further research indicates it is better than other saturated fats.

Credits: Amanda Scott, MS/RD/LD, EFNEP State Coordinator





Vegetarian Eating

Markena Minikon
County Extension Agent -
Nutrition & Health

You can get all the nutrients you need from a vegetarian eating plan by eating a variety of foods. But you may need to take extra steps to make sure that you are getting enough [protein](#), [iron](#), [calcium](#), [zinc](#), and [vitamin B₁₂](#).

What extra steps you need to take depends on what type of vegetarian you are. Vegetarians fall into three groups:

- ♦ **Vegans** eat only plant-based foods. They do not eat any meat or animal products, including milk and eggs.
- ♦ **Lacto-vegetarians** consume milk and milk products along with plant-based foods. They do not eat eggs.
- ♦ **Lacto-ovo vegetarians** eat eggs and milk and milk products, in addition to plant-based foods.

Milk and milk products are good sources of [calcium](#), [vitamin B₁₂](#), and [complete protein](#). Eggs are a good source of [vitamin B₁₂](#) and complete protein. So if you don't eat milk or eggs, you need to look elsewhere for these [nutrients](#).

By clicking on the links below from the Office of Women's Health website at <http://womenshealth.gov/fitness-nutrition/nutrition-basics/>, you can find lists of food sources for these nutrients, including non-animal sources:

- ♦ [Protein](#)
- ♦ [Iron](#)
- ♦ [Calcium](#)
- ♦ [Zinc](#)
- ♦ [Vitamin B₁₂](#)

Keep in mind that plants provide [incomplete protein](#). In order to get all the amino acids your body needs, you have to eat a variety of plant foods. So, for instance, eating brown rice with beans will give you complete protein because each food contains the amino acids that the other food lacks.

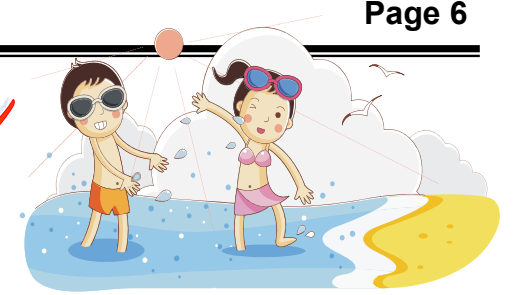
With careful planning, vegetarian eating plans can be quite healthy. Because you are primarily eating foods from nonmeat sources, you tend to get less fat and cholesterol and more fiber than from meat-based eating plans.

Source – Office of Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services




Making Summer Safe for Kids

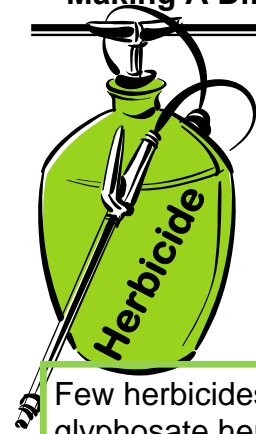
Tiffany Traylor
Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Agent
Cooperative Extension Program



The summer is fast approaching and it is a great time for kids to have fun and relax with outdoor activities. Whether your kids are young or teens there are things for all to do outside including swimming, biking, and hiking. It is important to remember all safety precautions related to each outdoor activity. The following list is comprised of common outdoor activities and safety tips related to that activity as reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

1. Master Water Safety
 - a. Practice healthy, safe swimming
 - Don't swallow the water you swim in and take young children on bathroom breaks every hour or check diapers every 30-60 minutes.
 - b. Prevent Drowning
 - Always supervise children when in or around water and teach them to swim
 - Learn CPR skills
 - c. Ensure boating safety
 - Wear a properly fitting life jacket every time you and your loved ones are on the water.
2. Beat the Heat
 - a. Stay Cool
 - Never leave infants, children or pets in a parked car even if the windows are cracked.
 - Dress infants and children in loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
 - b. Avoid sunburn
 - Just a few serious sunburns can increase your and your child's risk for skin cancer later in life.
 - Use sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and UVA and UVB protection every time you go outside.
3. Be safe at play, work and home
 - a. Play Safe
 - Make sure that the surfaces under playground equipment are safe, soft, and well maintained.
 - b. Work Safe
 - Young workers have high job injury rates. Hazards in the workplace, inexperience, and lack of safety training may increase injury risks for young workers.
 - c. At home safety
 - Know fire prevention, microwave use, and living with pets.
4. Prevent Concussions
 - a. Use Protective Equipment
 - Make sure that kids and teens wear the right protective equipment for their activity. Protective equipment should fit properly and be in good condition for biking, hiking, and rollerblading.
5. Stop the violence
 - a. Protect your children from electronic aggression
 - Healthy relationship behaviors can have a positive effect on teen's emotional development.
 - b. Protect your children from teen dating violence.
 - Nearly one in 10 teens report having been hit or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend. Dating violence can be prevented when teens, families, and communities work together.

*Article Adapted from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Glyphosate Herbicides

Valuable but often misunderstood weed management tool

Steve Chaney
County Extension
Agent - Horticulture

Few herbicides are needed regularly for managing weeds in the home lawn and garden, yet glyphosate herbicides are a valuable, environmentally safe tool for weed management. Glyphosate (originally packaged only as Roundup) effectively kills the entire weed and can severely damage woody plants (trees, shrubs and vines). It can be used effectively to edge planting beds to eliminate invasions by Bermudagrass and other weeds. Other uses include edging mulched rings around trees, controlling weeds in driveway and sidewalk cracks, and eliminating weeds or turf grass at the bases of fences. Effective use of glyphosate can reduce the need for flexible-line trimmers and edger's. One or two applications per year can significantly reduce landscape maintenance.

Herbicides containing glyphosate (or closely related formulations) are now available under several brand names. Read the "active ingredients" list on the product, and look for glyphosate and the percentage in volume that is in your product. Read the label directions carefully for effective and safe use of this herbicide. Also understand that when using herbicides containing glyphosate and closely related formulas, you may not see visible signs of damage to the targeted weeds for a few days to a week.

Ready – to – use (RTU) products are available as well as concentrate, the RTU products eliminate the need for mixing concentrated glyphosate with water. These products do cost more but are often worth it to some homeowners for their safety and convenience.

Glyphosate products are nonselective; they kill, or severely damage, most anything you spray them on but yet they do not persist in the soil (like a soil sterilant). Tremendous amounts of research have been conducted on glyphosate products regarding their effectiveness and environmental impact. The definitive research shows that they work, but more important, that microorganisms break down glyphosate rapidly, leaving no long lasting residue in the soil.

Glyphosate is absorbed through the leaves of the plants, and then translocated to the roots, thereby killing the entire plant. Exceptionally tough-to-control weeds, such as morning glory, nutgrass (nutsedge), poison ivy, and smilax may take multiple applications. Glyphosate can be sprayed on rough bark of mature trees without being absorbed (and damaging the tree).

One caution has arisen from recent research: **Do not spray Glyphosate on the trunk of crape myrtles.** The bark of crape myrtle exfoliates (sheds, which is a wonderful characteristic), and thus the trunk will absorb glyphosate and potentially damage the tree.

A final word of caution when using this product or other herbicides: When spraying glyphosate, always walk backwards. Do not walk through sprayed areas, or your shoes will become applicators. Nothing like a polka-dotted lawn to convince you to walk carefully!



To Mulch or Not to Mulch

Laura M. Miller
County Extension Agent -
Horticulture



Is that even a question? For years Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and other land grant university horticulturists have recommended keeping a 2-4 inch layer of organic mulch on landscape beds and around trees and shrubs. The benefits of mulch are usually listed as preventing evaporation of soil moisture from bare soil surfaces, moderating soil temperature in both cold and hot weather, inhibiting weed growth, and just looking good. Organic mulches also slowly add organic material and nutrients to the soil as they break down.

While non-organic mulches such as rocks or synthetic materials may have applications where their durability and the fact that they stay put are great advantages, organic mulches improve microbial, earthworm, and beneficial insect populations and air penetration in the soil. Composted yard waste makes excellent mulch, but not all mulches are compost, which is decayed to a degree that the source materials are not recognizable. The most sustainable mulch choice is whatever can be locally sourced. It is hard to beat the leaves or needles that fall from a tree as mulch for that tree.

At the North Central Texas Urban Forestry Conference held in Fort Worth February 28, 2014 speaker Dr. Ed Gilman, noted University of Florida professor and Extension Specialist in Arboriculture, asked the participants to think about how we use mulch. He pointed out that the use of mulch is a relatively recent landscape practice, becoming popular in the 1970s and that mulch is almost never used in Europe or even in California. For a recently published paper, he reviewed 65 studies that included mulch and tree planting, and found that mulch was never associated with improved tree survival rates and only resulted in improved tree growth in four of the 65 studies. In his own study which included seven different treatments, he found that mulch on the root ball has little impact on water loss from the tree since a much larger portion of water lost from the root ball is transpired (about 99%), not evaporated (less than 1%) from the root ball surface. Because of the potential negative effects of mulch too close to the trunk of the tree, including cutting off oxygen to roots, shedding irrigation and rain water, and keeping roots too wet in poorly drained soils, even rotting the trunk, he now recommends keeping mulch off the root ball.

Dr. Bert Cregg, Associate Professor and Extension Specialist and Michigan State University, was concerned about a mulch backlash of sorts and decided to include a mulch treatment in his SOME-DED-TREES, the Social Media Designed Tree Transplant Study, project. He tracked soil moisture at two depths (0-6" and 0-18") at his study site during the summer of 2013 and found that soil moisture was almost always greater with mulch. For example, in the 0-18" soil profile, just outside the container root-ball (where new roots are becoming established) mulch increased soil moisture on 7 out of the 8 days he measured in June, July, August, and September. The trees were irrigated weekly for the first month after transplanting in May 2012. After that, they were not irrigated.

So, what's the bottom line? Mulch is good. Mulch properly applied is better. Don't put mulch on top of the root ball of newly installed plants-- trees, shrubs, annuals or perennials-- to avoid creating an environment that favors crown rot rather than root growth. Irrigate before applying mulch to make sure that water reaches the soil rather remaining only in the mulch layer. When water for irrigation is available and properly applied, mulch may not be important. When water stress is likely, as it is this summer, mulch is one of the best tools we have to conserve soil moisture and keep our plants happy when it is hot and dry.



Insta-Memories

Shannon Johnson-Lackey
4-H Extension Agent
Cooperative Extension Program

As the school year winds to an end in preparation for the summer break, it is often a reminder that vacations are upon us. Trips may have been planned months, weeks or days before the scheduled departure. Excitement builds as thoughts of potential adventures loom. With the promise of new discoveries, plentiful memory-making experiences and the knowledge that you cannot get these days back, do not forget to charge the cell phone and utilize that handy camera feature.

Your camera phone can be an essential tool while you seek new experiences away from home. The camera phone will aide in recording those memories you'll want to relive time and time again. A handy camera phone is paramount in capturing those smiles which occur unexpectedly or the look of amazement at the discovery of a sought-after treasure. And after you've snapped those priceless memories, consider uploading them onto *Instagram*, a fast and beautiful way to share life's moments with friends and family.

The Digital Photography School offers tips on *Improving Camera Phone Photos*. The following 12 tips are from their website at <http://digital-photography-school.com/how-to-use-a-camera-phone/>:

1. Light Your Subject Well
 - If possible shoot outside or turn on lights when shooting inside
2. Get Close to Your Subject
 - Fill up your viewfinder with your subject.
3. Keep Still
 - The more steady your camera phone is when taking your shot the clearer your image will be.
4. Edit Images Later
 - Take your shots in color at high resolution to keep your options open on how to treat it later.
5. Don't Throw Away Mistakes
 - If possible hang onto your shots until you can get them on your PC.
6. Avoid Using the Digital Zoom
 - If the camera's zoom is a 'digital zoom' it will decrease the quality of your shot to use it (you'll end up with a more pixelated shot).
7. Experiment with White Balance
 - Adjusting white balance allows you to modify color balance in your images based on shooting conditions.
8. Take Loads of Shots and Experiment
 - Experiment with different modes and composition.
9. Follow Rules of Composition (and then break them)
 - Practice taking shots using the Rule of Thirds. Shoot from the hip, the floor, up high, up close – anything goes.
10. Keep Your Lens Clean
 - From time to time clean the lens of your camera using a soft cloth.
11. Observe Camera Phone Etiquette
 - While there is no formal set of rules for using camera phones it is worth considering how you use it and what impact it might have upon others.
12. Use the Highest Resolution Possible on Your Camera Phone
 - The higher your resolution the clearer your shot will be.

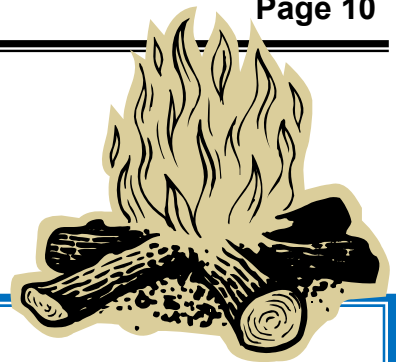


Don't Delay, Pack Your Camera Phone Today!!!

For Insta-4-H Memories, follow me on Instagram @tccep4h.

Lets go Summer camping

Cassius McAlister
4-H Extension Agent
Cooperative Extension Program



One of the many issues faced by parents is what will I do with Jane or John during the summer months. Summer camps are one option available. Let's take a look at how to find them and what to look for in a summer camp.

1. Cost:

No matter where I find the camp, as a parent the first thing I look at is cost. I want to know if I am getting my money's worth. How many hours a day is the program available? What activities are included in the cost? Are any meals or snacks provided?

Many cities offer summer camp opportunities but fill up fast due to demand. With that fact in mind do not wait until the last minute! Three or four days before school lets out for summer vacation to find a suitable camp is too late to have many options.

2. Theme:

Some camps are theme based and the participants go on a different field trip every day. These type camps have the opportunity of exposing Jane or John to many different adventures. Some camps are based on physical activity and allow Jane or John the opportunity to participate in one particular activity several times a week. What activities interest your child?

3. Time:

Another thing to look at before choosing a camp is the hours of operation. Is the camp open early enough or late enough for me to get everything I need done in a day? Am I looking for a camp to enroll Jane and John in for just a few days, a week, and a month or for the entire summer?

4. Places to Search:

Here are some places to search for a summer camp you can visit your city's website, Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy Scout and Girl Scout, YMCA and YWCA and other educational organization websites such as science museums, art galleries. Checking with your local 4-H Agent and after school providers is another option.

5. Staff Makeup:

Another key point in helping make the right decision on which summer camp is the camps staff, what is it composed of? This is especially important if Jane or John will have to spend the night at camp. Is the composition of the camps' staff something I am ok with? Is the staff composed of adults or teenagers? Does any marketing of the camp state whether the staff is certified or gives a brief description of the staff's training and background. Are there any international staffers employed which can enhance the learning opportunities for little Jane or John?



These are some of the decisions that have to be made when searching for a Summer Camp. So remember when deciding on the right summer camp for little Jane or John to attend please take into account the type of camp, whether camp involves spending the night and making sure that camp theme is of interest to little Jane or John.



Are We Ready?

Cindy Bryant
County Extension Agent 4-H

April showers bring May flowers. Spring is a great time for youth to learn about meteorology. As the temperatures begin to increase, so does evaporation. The warm vapor rises to higher elevations where it cools and condenses resulting in various types of clouds. Cumulonimbus clouds are sometimes referred to as "thunderstorm

clouds" because they often produce heavy rain, gusty winds, hail, thunder, and lightning. It is from these clouds that tornadoes sometimes form. The clash of a mass of warm, moist air from the Gulf and cool, dry air from the north creates an unstable atmosphere. A change in wind direction and increase in speed can cause a spiral rotation. Coupled with rising updrafts, these factors can result in a tornado.

Along with learning about the fascinating world of weather, youth also need to learn to appreciate its benefits and respect its power. Understanding the importance of safety practices during storms is a valuable lesson which is prudent to review on an annual basis.

Natural disasters in Texas can be caused by a variety of weather hazards such as floods, tornadoes, etc. Sometimes, these storms result in power outages or evacuations to safety. As the summer months approach, families can prepare for the unexpected by reviewing the plan and assembling a disaster supplies kit...and asking themselves, "Are We Ready?"

Disaster Supplies Kit: A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic necessities that family members will need during and immediately after a disaster. The supplies may be kept in a backpack and stored in a portable trunk or sealable plastic trash can in your vehicle or other area of easy access.

Contents: Each kit should contain enough supplies to enable your family members to take care of themselves for at least 3 days.

- ♦ *Water* - Each person requires 1 gallon of water per day.
- ♦ *Food* - Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation, or cooking. Examples include: protein or fruit bars, dried fruit, nuts, peanut butter, crackers, canned juices, etc. Also pack a hand-operated can opener and disposable eating utensils.
- ♦ *Clean air items* - Pack nose and mouth protection masks (N-95 rating), plastic sheeting, and duct tape, in case you need to create a barrier between yourself and airborne contamination.
- ♦ *Clothing* - Gather one complete change of clothes, a pair of shoes, socks, and a blanket per person.
- ♦ *First aid kit* - Include two pairs of sterile gloves, sterile gauze, soap, antibiotic towelettes, antibiotic ointment, burn ointment, adhesive bandages, thermometer, prescription medications, and prescribed medical supplies.
- ♦ *Emergency items* - Pack a battery-powered (or hand-crank power) radio, flashlights, extra batteries, whistle, shovel, basic tools, baby wipes, trash bags, toilet paper, and a state map.
- ♦ *Special needs items* - If there is a baby in the family or members with special needs make sure to pack needed items.
- ♦ *Maintain your kit* - Batteries should be replaced every six months and food items should be replaced according to the expiration dates.
- ♦ *Families with pets* should pack a separate disaster kit with items specific to their pet's needs.

Advance planning for a disaster enables families to be better prepared should the situation arise. When your family considers the question, "Are we ready?" the answer will be "YES".

For additional information on family disaster plans, see the Get Prepared section at www.ready.gov/index.html

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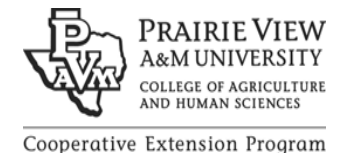
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