



Celebrate Safely This Holiday Season

As you gather with friends and family this holiday, it's important to practice simple safety habits that maximize your enjoyment. We often let our guards down during this festive time, which can lead to overindulgence and a lowering of the high standards we set for our families, our homes and our pets. Preparing against some common holiday dangers will enable your family to enjoy another spectacular season.

Decorations

- Purchase only fresh, live trees. Keep the stand filled with water and covered to keep away pets.
- Check ornaments and lights for damage. Place fragile pieces out of reach for kids and pets.
- Extinguish all candles and fires before leaving a room or going to bed.

Presents

- Give gifts that are age appropriate — small parts can cause big problems with younger children.
- Pick up wrapping paper and ribbon, which can be a tripping or choking hazard.
- Re-use or recycle gift boxes and bows.

Eating and Drinking

- Keep foods at proper temperatures, and throw out any leftovers that are out too long.
- Wash hands, cookware, and serving utensils that contact raw meat.
- Use a designated driver or call a cab!



Outdoors

- Shovel walkways and driveways to clear of ice and snow.
- Make certain lights, decorations and extension cords are rated for outdoor use.
- Climbing ladders to hang decorations is a two-person job — use a spotter.

Pets

- Keep chocolate, poinsettias, mistletoe and other potential poisons away from dogs and cats.
- Make certain garbage can lids are securely sealed to keep pets from helping themselves.
- Outdoor pets need extra bedding for warmth in colder temperatures.

From the Director



Gil Copley

What does public health do for you? That's probably a question you've never asked yourself. Yet public health, as invisible as it may be, is around you every day and providing benefits that are important to almost everyone. In Part I of "Invisible Public Health", I'm going to look at food issues that have a daily impact on a number of residents who "eat out" and participate in activities common in the community.

In any given year, almost everyone eats out at a restaurant. Whether it is fast food, a sit-down restaurant, buying groceries or attending a catered event, you are protected by an invisible shield of public health activity in the background. Food is also prepared and sold or served in many other locations. Every business, profit or not-for profit, must have a permit to sell potentially hazardous food to the public. Potentially hazardous food is food that is capable of supporting the rapid growth of harmful organisms. Food can also become hazardous if contaminated by harmful organisms when handled during preparation or serving.

To continue reading this article, click on [From the Director](#)



Setting the “Gold” Standard

Twelve Local Eateries Rewarded For Outstanding Food Safety, Stewardship

For the fourth consecutive year, the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment recognizes local food service establishments for raising the industry standard. This month, the **24 Carrot Gold Food Safety Excellence Awards** were presented to 12 local eateries that demonstrated excellence in food safety and sanitation, as well as successful employee education.

“Excellence in food safety is the norm in St. Charles County,” said Pieter Sheehan, director of the Division of



Environmental Health and Protection. “One thing the 24 Carrot Gold Awards plainly show is that our County’s many food establishments — whether they serve our children, those in need, or the community as a whole — place a high commodity on food safety.”

To be eligible for consideration, recipients of the 24 Carrot Gold Awards cannot have any critical violations in the last 12 months, and no more than six non-critical violations over the same time period. In addition, at least 90 percent of the food facility managers at the establishment must possess valid food safety certification. The facility must also have a valid St. Charles County Food Establishment Permit and be in good standing with the department.

These organizations have made an outstanding commitment to go beyond safe food services and have strived to enhance our community. For example, Buffalo Wild Wings regularly provides gift coupons that reward student achievement and exemplifies environmental stewardship through its program to reduce the amount of paper products used in its service.

“As you’re out and about this holiday season, we hope you’ll help us in recognizing the many food service institutions that strive to improve our community’s health and well-being,” Sheehan noted.

Throughout the year, members of the Division of Environmental Public Health and Protection work with area businesses and organizations to promote healthy conditions in our community. To learn more ways the division ensures your safety or to review the latest food

service inspection scores, please [CLICK HERE](#).

This year's **24 Carrot Gold Food Safety Excellence Award** recipients are:

- **Buffalo Wild Wings** - Wentzville
- **Culvers** - Wentzville
- **El Agave Mexican Restaurant** - St. Charles
- **Green Tree Elementary School** - Lake Saint Louis
- **Penn Station East Coast Subs** - St. Charles
- **Pizza Hut** - O’Fallon
- **Rise and Dine Restaurant** - Wentzville
- **Schucks (Dardenne Crossing)** - O’Fallon
- **T. Arcobassos** - Weldon Spring
- **The Salvation Army** - St. Charles
- **Tony’s on Main Street** - St. Charles
- **Twin Chimneys Elementary School** - O’Fallon

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Helpful Phone Numbers	
Division of Public Health (636) 949-7400	WIC (636) 949-7402
Immunizations (636) 949-1857	Recycle Works Central (636) 949-7900, ext. 4267
Vital Records (636) 949-7558	Recycle Works West (636) 949-7900, ext. 4271
Health Education and STD Clinic (636) 949-7401	Division of Humane Services Pet Adoption Center (636) 949-7387
Division of Environmental Health and Protection (636) 949-1800	Animal Control (636) 949-7347

Give a Natural Gift After the Holiday

After the Yuletide celebration, give one more gift by recycling your natural Christmas tree so that it may be turned into mulch or fish habitat. Again this year, St. Charles County is partnering with area municipalities to offer residents this free service at various sites from Dec. 26 through Jan. 18.

Be sure to remove the tree stand, decorations, and plastic bag or cover before leaving your tree at one of the locations below:

St. Peters

- Laurel Park (upper parking lot)
enter via McClay Valley Rd.
- St. Peters Golf & Recreation Center
200A Salt Lick Rd.
- St. Peters Earth Centre, 115 Ecology Dr.
*Locations open 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
Monday thru Saturday, Dec. 28 to Jan. 18*

Wentzville

- Progress Park (parking lot), 968 Meyer Rd.
Location open 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Dec. 26 to Jan. 18

O'Fallon

- Civic Park (upper parking lot), 400 Civic Park Dr.
- O'Fallon Sports Park, 3589 Hwy. K
Locations open from dawn to dusk, Dec. 26 to Jan. 18

Lake Saint Louis

- Founders Park, 7 Freymuth Road
Location open during daylight hours, Dec. 26 to Jan. 17

St. Charles County

- Quail Ridge Park (Group Picnic Area)
5501 Quail Ridge Pkwy. (Wentzville)
Location open 7 a.m. to sunset, Dec. 26 to Jan. 22

Another great idea for your used Christmas tree is to place it in your backyard to use as a bird feeder and sanctuary. Fresh orange slices, strung popcorn, or other treats will attract birds. The branches can provide shelter from the icy winter winds. Be sure all decorations, hooks, garland, and tinsel strands are removed.

For an even "greener" Christmas next year, get a rooted (ball and burlapped or containerized) tree. When the holidays are over, plant it in your yard.

Non-foil gift boxes, wrapping paper and Christmas tree lights may be recycled at Recycle Works West (2110 E. Pitman Ave., in Wentzville) or Recycle Works Central (60 Triad South Dr., in St. Charles) Monday through Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information about St. Charles County recycling programs, please call 636-949-1800 or [CLICK HERE](#).



Shelter Pets Seek Loving Homes

If you're thinking of adding another member to your household this holiday season, look no further than the St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center to find a furry friend. Located at 4850 Mid Rivers Mall Dr., in St. Peters, the center will host its annual Holiday Pet Adoption on Saturday, Dec. 18 (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) where you can interact with dogs or cats to find the "purr-fect" present for your family.



In addition to consultations and on-site adoptions, the day's activities will provide counseling to prepare you and your family for your new pet. An experienced trainer will offer tips to make the transition process less stressful, and those who adopt a pet during the Holiday Event will receive a free gift. Santa will also be available for photos.

The Pet Adoption Center has served this County for more than a decade, successfully placing more than 25,000 pets into loving homes. All pets placed by the Pet Adoption Center undergo a thorough health exam and receive their initial vaccinations. They are also micro-chipped for identification and are spayed or neutered.

For information on the St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center, please call 636-949-PETS (7387) or [CLICK HERE](#).

Compared to fees charged by other centers, the St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center offers its services at an outstanding value. Adoption costs through the Pet Adoption Center are:

- **Puppies: \$60**
- **Adult dogs: \$50**
- **Kittens: \$40**
- **Adult cats: \$30**

Parenting 101 Teaches Care-giving Tips

Attendees Earn Free Child Safety Seats

Through grant funding from the Community and Children's Resource Board (CCRB), the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment is now offering eligible guardians a child safety seat.

The safety seats are a part of the department's free educational program entitled, **Parenting 101**. Open to parents, grandparents, foster parents, and other guardians, the two-hour session will discuss many aspects of infant, child and parent safety. At the end of the class, participants will be given a *brand new* Scenera Convertible Child Safety Seat and will be instructed on the proper installation of this life-saving device.



Compliant with Missouri state law, this Safety Seat will fit infants and toddlers weighing 5-40 pounds and those 19-43 inches tall.

"This is such an important class for parents," said Molly Rollins, community health nurse and health educator. "In addition to discovering ways to become an even better parent, attendees will take home a device that studies prove reduces or prevents injuries when used properly."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, every year, thousands of young children are killed or injured in crashes — mainly because 3 out of 4 children are not properly secured, or even worse, not restrained at all. Proper use of child safety seats will reduce death by 71 percent for infants (under age 1) and 54 percent for toddlers (age 1-4) (MODOT).

Parenting 101 classes are:

- **Dec. 16 (2 - 4 p.m.)**
- **Jan. 11 (10 a.m. - noon)**
- **Jan. 20 (2 - 4 p.m.)**

Class sizes are limited, so
please call today!

If you, or someone you know, would be interested in discovering more information about this class, or would like to register. Please **EMAIL Molly Rollins** or call 636-949-7400, ext. 6220.



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Protect Yourself.



Get shot.

St. Charles County
offers low-cost
flu vaccinations.

Call (636) 949-1857
to make an
appointment.

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THE FLU**



St. Charles County
Adult
Immunization
Program