



## The ABCs of Temporary Food Permits

Festivals filled with food, fun, and families are one of the best parts about living in St. Charles County. However, if your civic group or other organization is planning to serve funnel cakes, lemonade, or other tasty treats at a public event, you will need to get a permit. Fortunately, obtaining a temporary event food permit in St. Charles County is as easy as pie!

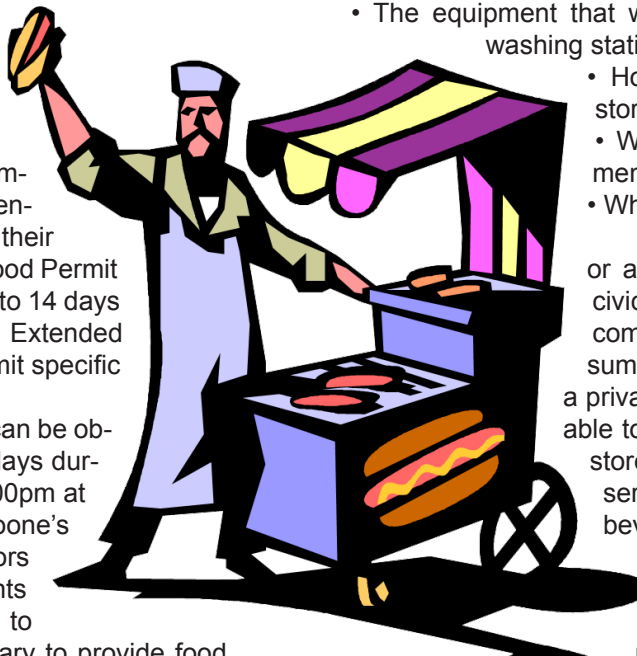
A temporary public event is defined as any event that invites or encourages members of the community to attend, regardless of the cost to an individual. All food service vendors at public events are required to obtain a Temporary Event Permit, and each vendor is responsible for obtaining their own permit. Once a Temporary Food Permit has been issued, it is good for up to 14 days of food service at a single event. Extended permit holders must obtain a permit specific to each event.

Temporary food permits can be obtained by appointment, or on Fridays during event season from 1:00 to 5:00pm at the health department, 1650 Boone's Lick Road in St. Charles. Inspectors are available to assist applicants with filling out their forms and to explain the requirements necessary to provide food safely. Permits should be secured well in advance of an event, so plan ahead.

Before applying for a permit, applicants should decide on the following:

- The complete menu, including beverages
- The booth structure (whether provided by the event sponsor or the vendor)

- Methods to maintain hot and cold product temperatures
- The equipment that will be required, including a hand washing station



- How foods will be transported and stored
- Where and how clean-up of equipment will be done
- Who will be in charge of the booth.

Food can be prepared in the booth, or at an approved restaurant, school, civic center, or similar facility (called a commissary). No food for public consumption may be prepared or stored in a private residence. Inspectors are available to discuss where best to prepare or store food prior to your event. Food service vehicles, including rental beverage trailers, must meet health standards for temporary event operations.

The fee for a Temporary Food Permit is \$50. Fees are waived for religious, educational, non-profit, fraternal, and civic organizations, excluding social and country clubs. Documentation of tax-exempt status must be submitted with the permit application.

For more information about temporary permits, visit [www.scchealth.org](http://www.scchealth.org) or call (636) 949-1800.

## From the Director



Gil Copley

National Radon Action Month 2008 ended on January 31, but that doesn't mean the threat has ended. In recent weeks, the Department of Community Health and the Environment received a number of requests for free radon testing kits. While we don't know exactly why the number of requests increased, the fact that they did increase is encouraging. More requests are a good thing!

Radon is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas produced by the decay of uranium. Uranium is found in trace amounts almost everywhere. Normally, the concentrations that are naturally found are not hazardous. However, when uranium is contained in soil under and against the foundation of a building, cracks and openings in the foundation can allow radon to leak inside and become concentrated. If the concentration is high enough, it can substantially increase the risk of lung cancer in occupants of the building.

To read the rest of this article, click on [From the Director](#)



# Whooping Cough Alert

Outbreak reported in St. Louis County



Parents, schools, and child care providers should be on alert for children with symptoms of pertussis, also known as whooping cough. The St. Louis County Health Department recently warned schools and health care providers of an outbreak of the disease involving 16 children in the area.

Whooping cough is a highly contagious respiratory tract infection caused by the bacteria *Bordetella pertussis*. Although it initially resembles an ordinary cold, whooping cough may eventually turn more serious, particularly in infants. Whooping cough is most contagious before the coughing starts. The best way to prevent it is through vaccinations.

There are four combination vaccines used to prevent diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis: DTaP, Tdap, DT, and Td. Two of these (DTaP and DT) are given to children younger than seven, and two (Tdap and Td) are given to older children and adults.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends five doses of diphtheria and tetanus toxoids and acellular pertussis (DTaP) vaccine for infants and young children. One dose of DTaP vaccine is recommended

at each of the following ages: 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 15-18 months, and 4-6 years old. DTaP vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

Tdap is another of the combination vaccines used to prevent pertussis. The preferred age for routine vaccination with Tdap is 11 or 12 years old. Adolescents aged 11 through 18 should receive a single dose of Tdap instead of Td for booster immunization against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis if they have completed the recommended childhood DTP/DTaP vaccination series.

Adults may also require reimmunization. If you are 19 through 64 years old and have not previously received a dose of Tdap, a single dose of the vaccine should replace a single dose of Td for booster immunization if the most recent tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine was received at least ten years earlier. In addition, adults in close contact with infants under twelve months who have not previously received Tdap should receive a dose.

## Symptoms of Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Low grade fever
- Cough
- After one to two weeks, the disease may progress to bursts of numerous rapid coughs, called paroxysms

## Flu on the Rise in St. Charles County

Influenza is making its presence felt in St. Charles County. There have been more than 500 cases of the flu reported in the county so far this season, with more than 80 percent of those diagnosed in January. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers flu activity in Missouri to be "sporadic." However, this does not take into account the spike in flu-like illness seen in eastern Missouri in the last two weeks of the month.

In the United States, the flu season generally runs from November through March, with the peak occurring in

February. A flu vaccine is the first and best defense against influenza. Health care providers typically begin offering the vaccine in October. Flu season can last as late as May, so if you haven't received a flu shot yet, check with your health care provider to see if you can still get one.

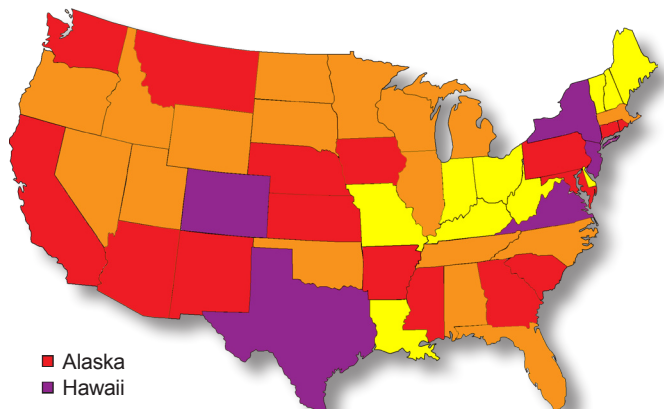
Antiviral drugs are an important second line of defense against the flu. They can be used for treatment or to prevent infection with flu viruses. Treatment with antiviral drugs should begin within 48 hours of getting sick, and can reduce your symptoms and shorten the time you are sick.

Good hygiene is also important in combating illness. You can take everyday preventive steps like frequent hand washing to decrease your chances of getting the flu. However, if you do get sick, reduce your contact with others and cover your cough to help keep germs from spreading. Get plenty of rest, and drink lots of fluids. Avoid using alcohol or tobacco. You may also want to take an over-the-counter medication to relieve some of your flu symptoms. However, never give aspirin to children or teens with flu-like symptoms without consulting your health care provider.

## Flu Activity Update

CDC report for the week ending January 19, 2008.

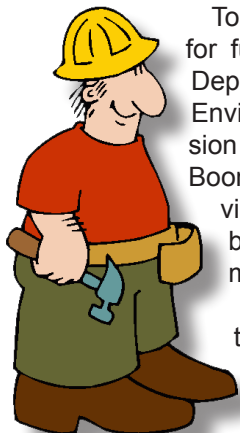
Follow [this link](#) for the latest map.



■ Alaska ■ Hawaii  
□ No Activity/No Report ■ Sporadic ■ Local ■ Regional ■ Widespread

# Under Construction

Renovations will affect operations at health department



To better serve the public, and provide for future growth, the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment is in the midst of an expansion and renovation project at its building on Boone's Lick Road in St. Charles. All services will continue to be offered, but may be temporarily relocated as construction moves forward.

The new administrative area, on the south end of the building, opened in late 2007. For residents seeking birth or death certificates, Vital Records has temporarily moved to the lower level of this new area. Patrons may enter through the doors on the southwest corner and use the stairs or elevator to access Vital Records. The southwest doors are also used to access the Health Clinic.

WIC clients should call ahead before their appointments, as WIC will be moving to a temporary facility in late February. This facility, located at 400 N. Second St., is just north of the County Court building in downtown St. Charles.

Signs will be posted around the health department building to guide citizens during the renovations. We ask for your patience as we move forward on this project to improve the delivery of services to residents. Updates on the progress of construction will be available by calling (636) 949-7400 or by logging on to [www.scchealth.org](http://www.scchealth.org).

**Foreshadowing Spring**

Groundhog Day is Saturday, February 2

Helpful Phone Numbers	
Division of Public Health (636) 949-7400	WIC (636) 949-7402
Health Education (636) 949-7401	Division of Environmental Services Recycling Services (636) 949-7415
Vital Records (636) 949-7558	Division of Humane Services (636) 949-7387
STD Prevention/Treatment (636) 949-7401	Animal Control (636) 949-7347
Environmental Public Health Program (636) 949-1800	

## Clear the Air of Secondhand Smoke

SmokeFree St. Charles County is hoping to "clear the air" so everyone can breathe easier. The coalition, made up of concerned citizens and civic organizations, is working together to educate the community and local decision-makers on the dangers of secondhand smoke and the health effects of smoking in bars, restaurants, and the workplace. SmokeFree St. Charles County has a long-term goal of helping to pass a comprehensive smoke-free policy that protects the health of our county's citizens.

Smoking places a huge burden on Missouri in terms of health, finances, and emotions. Thousands of Missouri residents die every year due to smoking-related illnesses. Treatment of these illnesses cost more than \$2 billion, and the productivity lost totals \$2.6 billion. The toll of illness and death is not just affecting individuals who choose to smoke, but also the health of the public and our children. A 2006 report from the Surgeon General found that even brief exposure to secondhand smoke can be harmful to adults and especially children. "The debate is over. The science is clear: there is no safe level of secondhand smoke," said former surgeon general Dr. Richard Carmona.

SmokeFree St. Charles County will be hosting a smoke-free happy hour in St. Peters on Wednesday, February 20 at 6:00pm at St. Charles Coffeehouse, 3821 McClay Rd. Participants can learn more about how secondhand smoke affects them and their family. Snacks and drinks will be provided.

## Looking For A New Friend?

The St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center is the purr-fect place to start your search for a furry companion! To see some of the animals available for adoption, [follow this link](#) to our page at Petfinder.com, our partner in finding homes for animals. We upload new images frequently, so check back often!



The Pet Adoption Center serves St. Charles County through sheltering and adopting animals, providing owner education, animal control services, and investigation of incidents involving animal cruelty and neglect. Visit the Pet Adoption Center at 4850

Mid Rivers Mall Drive in St. Peters, just three miles south of Mid Rivers Mall, Monday through Saturday from 10:00am to 5:00pm. For more information call (636) 949-PETS (7387).



## Spotlight On: Hollie Milam

Hollie Milam is a health educator for the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment. She works with the community to provide group education solutions for all ages, from young children to senior citizens. The subjects Hollie teaches include tobacco use prevention and cessation, HIV education, nutrition, good hygiene, and sun safety.

Hollie has worked for St. Charles County since April 2007. Prior to joining the county, she worked as a tobacco health educator for the Jefferson County Health Department, and also served the American Lung Association of Missouri and Behavioral Health Response.

Improving the health and quality of life of St. Charles County residents is what Hollie likes best about her job. Behavior modification and disease prevention is the focus of her job, by providing reliable health information and referrals to the community. She enjoys the diversity of community organizations that work together within St. Charles County to improve the physical and mental health of the people who live here.

Hollie is kept very busy by the schools and civic groups that request health education classes. In 2007, the professional educators in the health department delivered more than 300 classes, reaching well over 10,000 county residents. What's more, the majority of these classes are provided free of charge to the requesting organizations.

The most important message that Hollie wants to give to St. Charles County residents is that it's never too late to improve your health or the health of your loved ones. "We are a resource willing to help any individual or group seeking to prevent disease, modify unhealthy behaviors, or just looking for solid, factual health information," said Hollie.

For more information about the classes offered by the St. Charles County health department, call (636) 949-7900, extension 4244, or visit [www.scchealth.org](http://www.scchealth.org).



Health educator Hollie Milam talks to visitors during a recent health fair in St. Charles County.

## Dispose of Old Medications Safely

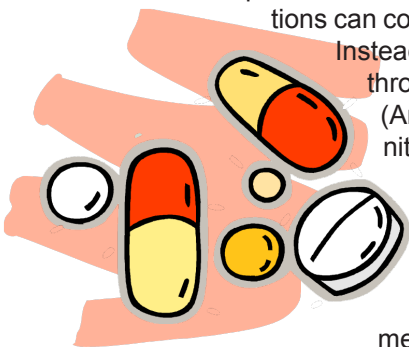
If you have old prescription or over-the-counter drugs cluttering up your medicine cabinet, don't flush them down the toilet or pour them down the drain. These medications can contaminate our environment.

Instead, dispose of them safely through St. Louis ARCHS (Area Resources for Community Health and Services) RxMEDS program.

RxMEDS, which stands for Regional eXcess MEdication Disposal Service, provides St. Louis metro residents with a free, safe way to dispose of unwanted medicine.

The drugs collected will be taken to a local, licensed incinerator and safely destroyed. RxMEDS, funded by a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), will run through the end of the year. The program is the first partnership of its kind in Missouri and only one of two funded nationally by the EPA this year.

For details on the RxMEDS program, click on [this link](#) or call St. Louis ARCHS at (314) 289-5629. Together, we can help protect our environment.



One in 30 women dies of breast cancer.  
One in three dies of heart disease.



February is American Heart Month.  
Get the facts at [www.HeartTruth.gov](http://www.HeartTruth.gov).

St. Charles County Government  
offices will be closed on  
Monday, February 18 for  
Presidents Day

