



# Fun (and Safe) in the Sun

## *Summer safety for you and your family*

Summer is just around the corner! The return of warmer weather brings thoughts of freedom, relaxation, exploration, and getting closer to nature. Whether you're grilling out in the backyard, hitting the pool, or exploring the great outdoors, be sure to keep yourself and your family safe and healthy this summer.

### **Choose Your Cover**

Summer means fun in the sun, but too much can lead to sunburns. Ultraviolet (UV) rays found in sunlight damage the skin and increase your risk of skin cancer, which is the most common form of cancer in the United States. The best way to prevent skin cancer is to protect yourself from the sun and its UV rays.

- Avoid going outside between 10:00am and 3:00pm, when solar rays are strongest.

- If you do need to go outside, use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15, and be sure to reapply as often as directed.

- Wear sunglasses that block both UVA and UVB light.

### **Keep Your Cool**

As the temperature soars, so do problems with heat-related illnesses. Infants and senior citizens are the most susceptible. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more Americans die from heat-related illnesses each year than from all other natural disasters combined. The best defense against heat-related illness is prevention.

- Avoid strenuous activity, especially during the hottest part of the day.

- Drink plenty of water, and avoid beverages that contain alcohol or caffeine.

- Stay in the air conditioning as much as possible.

- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.

- Eat smaller meals, and avoid foods that are high in protein.

### **Bug Off!**

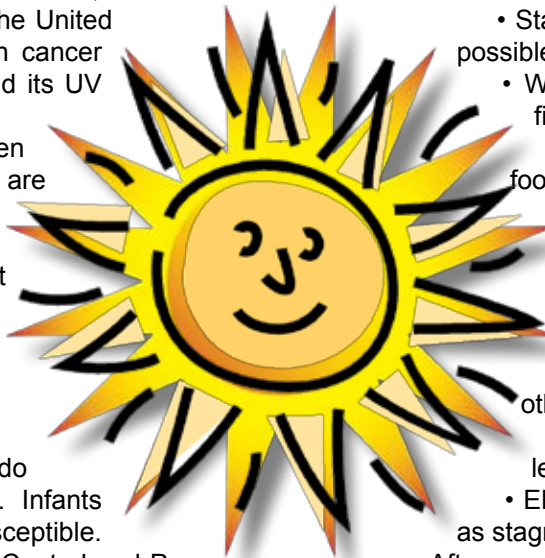
Warmer weather isn't just attractive to people. Mosquitoes, ticks, fleas, and other insects thrive in the summer. These bugs can transmit West Nile virus, Lyme disease, and other illnesses.

- Use an insect repellent with at least 20 percent DEET.

- Eliminate pest breeding grounds, such as stagnant water or tall grass.

- After spending time outside, check yourself, your children, and your pets for ticks and remove them promptly.

For more tips, download our [Summer Safety](#) packet from [www.scchealth.org](http://www.scchealth.org).



# From the Director



Gil Copley

A St. Charles County municipality's Wellness Commission recently recommended the enactment of a legislated smoking ban in restaurants and bars. An alternative proposal was also offered: a recommendation to put the issue on the ballot for voters to decide. For a number of reasons, these proposals did not gain significant support.

Smoking bans are notoriously hard to legislate. But does that mean that there is nothing that the health conscious person can do to avoid the potentially harmful effects of tobacco smoke and that we should throw up our hands in despair? It does not!

Here are some suggested personal strategies:

- If you don't smoke now, DON'T START! This is by far the best way to avoid the adverse health impact of tobacco smoke.
- If you do smoke, STOP!

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



# Child Safety Seat Program



The St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment recently received a grant from the Community and Children's Resource Board of St. Charles County (CCRB) and the Children's Trust Fund (CTF) License Plate Fund to provide child abuse and child neglect prevention services. These funds will allow the department's health education division to instruct families on proper vehicle restraint use. The grant also provides enough money to equip 90 low-income families with a free child safety seat.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among children in the United States. In 2006, 674 children under the age of four were killed in traffic crashes in Missouri, according to the State Highway Patrol. Many of these deaths could have been prevented by placing children in age- and size-appropriate restraint systems. The CDC says by using proper restraints, serious and fatal injuries can be reduced by more than half.

Having a child safety seat is not enough. Parents who use a child restraint system often misuse it, which can result in possible injury or death of a child. In 2001, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) conducted child restraint checks in six states, including Missouri. Results from the NHTSA study were alarming, as nearly three-quarters of child safety restraint systems had one or more critical misuses.

The St. Charles County program will focus on proper restraint use for children 12 and under with an emphasis on age- and size-appropriate safety standards. Low-income families in St. Charles County may also be eligible to receive a free child safety seat. To qualify, a family's income cannot exceed 185 percent of the federal poverty level. For more information about the child safety seat program, contact health educator Hollie Milam at (636) 949-7413.

**TAKE THE TEST.**  
**TAKE CONTROL.**  
*National HIV Testing Day is June 27*  
[www.hivtest.org](http://www.hivtest.org)

## Spotlight On: Mary Neely

Mary Neely is one of the stalwarts of the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment. A 14-year employee of the county, Mary has been a nurse for more than twenty years. Currently, she works in the health education division, providing information on a wide variety of health topics to residents of St. Charles County. Mary also provides training for staff in the department's immunization program.



Health educator Mary Neely prepares for a presentation

Mary enjoys her work, which touches many people's lives. Helping people to make healthy choices to improve their well-being is an important part of her job. Among the topics Mary covers in her presentations are proper nutrition, handwashing and good hygiene, heart health, and sexually transmitted disease (STD) prevention.

St. Charles County holds a special place in Mary's heart. As she put it, "my family, friends, and life are all here."

Like many people, Mary has a dog at home, but hers has a special talent. "I taught my dog to ring a doorbell when he wants to go outside," Mary said. (Perhaps she can give lessons to other dog owners!)

In her work, Mary has learned many lessons, but one of the most important may be this: Life should be enjoyed.

"Fill your life with the people and things you love," Mary said. "Health is a continuous process. It is never too late to make changes for the better."



# Man Up!

## National Men's Health Week is June 9-15

From its inception in 1994 and anchored by a federal health education program, Men's Health Week is celebrated every June. Health screenings, health fairs, and other outreach activities are held across the United States to highlight the health issues faced by men. The purpose of Men's Health Week is to heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys.

This week gives health care providers, public policy makers, the media, and individuals an opportunity to encourage males to seek regular medical advice and early treatment for disease and injury. The response has been overwhelming, with hundreds of awareness activities in the United States and around the globe.

One of the goals of Men's Health Week is to encourage fathers, grandfathers, sons, brothers, and uncles to seek preventive health care services. On average, men are twice as likely as women to skip annual exams. Research also shows that men:

- are dying of the top causes of death at higher rates than women.
- are more likely to be uninsured than women.
- are the victims in 92 percent of workplace deaths.



Testicular cancer may not get the same "press" as breast cancer does, but that doesn't mean it's any less serious. Despite being one of the most curable cancers, many men are unaware of the risk, and rarely perform the self exams that are crucial to early detection and treatment.

According to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), testicular cancer is most common among men between the ages of 15 and 35. Symptoms include discomfort or pain in the lower abdomen, back, or groin, swelling and/or a lump in the testicle or scrotum, and a feeling of heaviness or sudden collection of fluid within the scrotum. Symptoms of testicular cancer are not always painful and can be mistaken for a hernia. Risk factors associated with testicular cancer include a history or family history of testicular cancer, congenital abnormalities, and an undescended testicle.

The rate of testicular cancer has more than doubled among white men in the past 40 years, according to a 2005 NCI report. Incidence among black men also doubled from 1988 to 2001. More than 8,000 men are diagnosed with tes-

Simply put, there is a silent crisis in America, a crisis of epic proportions. On average, American men live shorter and less-healthy lives than American women. In 1920, the average woman lived one year longer than a man. Now, despite improved health care and nutrition, men on average die six years earlier than women.

A recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study illustrates just how wide the health care gulf between the two genders is. There are several possible explanations for this disparity include:

- women generally are responsible for their family's health and so may think about health care needs more than men.
- men are less likely than women to take time off from work for health related issues.

This year, during National Men's Health Week, encourage the men in your life to seek the advice of a health care professional. Make sure they get the screenings they need, including a cholesterol check, mental health screening, and a prostate specific antigen (PSA) test if they are age 50 or over.

To learn more, log on to [www.menshealthweek.org](http://www.menshealthweek.org).



## Focus on Testicular Cancer

ticular cancer every year. One in every 250 men will develop testicular cancer in his lifetime.

Men should perform a monthly testicular self examination (TSE) to make sure there are no unusual changes in the scrotum. It is best to do a TSE during or right after a shower, when the scrotum is looser. Males should be familiar with their body, so that they can recognize any abnormalities. Any unusual lumps or pain in the testicles should be evaluated by a health care provider. For detailed instructions on how to perform a TSE, visit the American Cancer Society website at [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org). With early detection and treatment, the recovery rate for testicular cancer is greater than 90 percent.

### 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	

# Parents Encouraged to Help Revise Child Care Regulations

Missouri's parents and child care providers are invited to share their thoughts in a series of focus groups that will assist the Department of Health and Senior Services with drafting and promulgating new rules for group homes and child care centers. The Section for Child Care Regulation will develop new rules that will include current best practices to improve the protection of children in child care and reduce their risk of injury, abuse and communicable disease.

According to Cindy Hudson, administrator of the department's Section for Child Care Regulation, Missouri has not revised the rules since 1991. "We want Missouri parents to feel comfortable leaving their children in licensed child care centers, knowing that the centers are required to follow the most appropriate health and safety rules," Hudson said.

The Section for Child Care Regulation licenses 1,993 child care centers and 188 group homes in Missouri. It also provides technical assistance to providers on meeting regulatory standards of care. Soon, it will unveil a new website that informs parents and the public about inspection information for regulated child care providers in the state, similar to the department's Show-Me Long-Term Care site for nursing homes.

"Children are our most precious resource because they represent the future of our state," Hudson said. "We really encourage the public to attend these meetings."



## If You Go...

Saturday, June 7  
9:00-11:30am  
St. Louis Community  
College - Florissant  
Valley  
3400 Pershall Rd.  
Multipurpose Room

## Don't Be a "Pain in the Drain"!

Where does your neighborhood storm drain go? Unfortunately, storm drains do not lead to a wastewater treatment plant. To prevent flooding of streets and homes, stormwater runoff flows untreated to nearby streams or lakes. Pollutants are not removed.

Each time it rains, stormwater runoff carries street litter, pet wastes, oil, dirt, yard waste, and other chemicals into storm drains. The pollutants can seriously damage our community's water quality.

It affects you, because pollutants flow down storm drains to our streams and rivers, the source of our drinking water. This is where we like to live, fish, and play. Pollutants can also get into our groundwater, the source of drinking water for wells.

Many people blame industry for water pollution, but "nonpoint source pollution" from our own yards and neighborhoods is a significant source of contamination of the valuable water resources in Missouri.

You can help prevent pollution with these simple clean water tips:

- Sweep mud and debris off driveways and sidewalks

using a broom instead of a hose.

- Pick up litter. Did you know that a common culprit is trash flying out of truck beds?

- Mulch or compost grass clippings and yard waste, or arrange to have your yard waste collected. If this material goes down storm drains or is piled along stream banks, it actually causes more erosion and pollution. Call (636) 639-2035 to set up yard waste collection.

- Go to a car wash or use biodegradable, no-phosphorus soap to clean your vehicle, and be sure to sweep up dirt and debris.

- Properly dispose of hazardous household chemicals, including fluids from your vehicle. You can recycle auto fluids at Recycle Works West, 2110 E. Pitman Ave. in Wentzville. For other household hazardous waste,

drop off chemicals at a free collection. Call (636) 949-7415 or visit [www.scchealth.org/es](http://www.scchealth.org/es) for more information.

Landscape wisely. Try native plants that don't need extra water or fertilizer. To reduce chemical pesticides, try Integrated Pest Management. Get ideas at [www.GrowNative.org](http://www.GrowNative.org).



Your help in keeping our water clean makes a difference!