



Tornadoes and Lightning and Hail, Oh My!

March 12-16 is Severe Weather Awareness Week

The arrival of spring in St. Charles County usually brings fair skies and mild weather. However, the change of seasons can also mean the clash of air masses, leading to thunderstorms and tornadoes. Missouri lies on the eastern edge of Tornado Alley, and dozens of twisters plow across the state every year. St. Charles County has seen its share of tornadoes, most recently in January 2006.



Are you ready for a tornado? The state of Missouri will mark Severe Weather Awareness Week from March 12-16. The highlight of the week will be a statewide tornado drill on March 13. That afternoon, National Weather Service offices across the state will issue a mock tornado warning. Citizens are encouraged to use this time to review their weather emergency plans and conduct drills so everyone knows what to do when a tornado is approaching.

When severe weather does threaten, it's important to listen to local TV and radio stations for updated storm information. Also, be alert to changing weather conditions. Know the difference between a tornado watch and a tornado warning.

A *watch* means conditions are favorable for tornado development. Pay close attention to TV and radio, and be prepared to take action at a moment's notice.

A *warning* means a tornado has been spotted and may be headed for your area. Move to shelter immediately.

Missouri's "Ready in 3" program can help you be prepared for a weather emergency. The three steps are:

- *Creating* a plan for you, your family, and your school or business
- *Preparing* a kit for home, car, and work
- *Listening* for information about what to do and where to go during an emergency.

The St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment can also help you prepare. We offer presentations for schools, churches, and community groups about the "Ready in 3" program. In addition, our [Division of Emergency Management](#) also offers more detailed instruction on tornadoes, floods, and disaster planning. Contact us at 636-949-7400 for details, or to set up a class for your group.

The most important thing to remember in any emergency is to stay calm. Working together, we can be prepared and save lives.

Basic Emergency Supplies

- Water
- Canned or dried food
- Manual can opener
- Battery-powered radio
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit



From the Director



Gil Copley

In recent months, the Department of Community Health and the Environment has received an unusual number of requests for free radon test kits. The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services sends these test kits to local health departments throughout the state for distribution to residents. Why the number of requests has increased is much less important than the fact that it is a very good idea to test your home for radon. More requests are a good thing!

When my family and I moved to St. Charles County 11 years ago, one of the first things I did was to buy an inexpensive (less than \$20) radon test kit at a local hardware store and test our house. Using the kit is simplicity itself. You open it, read the short instructions for suggested placement in your house, put it out, and leave it undisturbed for the amount of time indicated. Then, at the end of that testing period, you put the kit in the postage-paid mailing envelope provided, fill out your information on the form with the kit, and then mail it. In few weeks, you will receive the test results in the mail.

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



Spring Cleaning

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Begins in April

Getting ready for spring cleaning? Have old paint or chemicals in the garage or under the stairs? St. Charles County Recycle Works is your free solution! Recycle Works complements curbside recycling programs by accepting hard to handle items typically not collected at the curb.

Starting in March, County residents can call 636-949-7900 ext. 4271 to make appointments to bring their household hazardous wastes to Recycle Works Central at 60 Triad South Drive in St. Charles. Collections run April through October. An appointment and proof of residency (such as a driver's license or tax bill) are required to drop off chemicals.

Food Safety in the News

There has been renewed public attention to food safety in recent weeks. Peanut butter, baby food, and chicken meat were all pulled from store shelves due to possible contamination. Public health officials in several states, including Missouri, are collaborating with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to investigate the outbreaks.

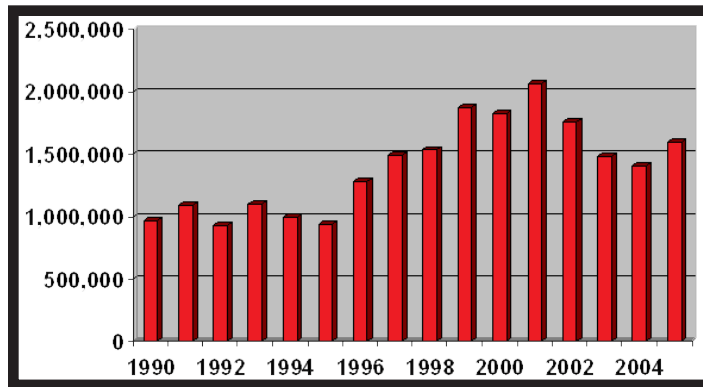


Sixteen people in Missouri were infected by Salmonella Tennessee, including one woman in St. Charles County. The bacteria is believed to have come from tainted peanut butter. Anyone who thinks they may have become ill after eating peanut butter should contact their health care provider. Those who have Peter Pan peanut butter purchased since December 2005 or Great Value peanut butter with a product code beginning with 2111 purchased since December 2005 should discard it. Health departments no longer need to collect jars for testing.

In the baby food case, jars of Earth's Best Organic 2 Wholesome Breakfast Apple Peach Barley may contain bacteria that can cause botulism. The affected food comes in 4.5 ounce jars with lot code PF6J14NP and EXP 14 SEP 08 printed on the lid. Consumers should not use the product, even if it does not look or smell spoiled.



Also being recalled are Oscar Mayer/Louis Rich brand ready-to-eat chicken breast strips. The U.S. Department of Agriculture says the meat may be contaminated with Listeria. The affected packages bear the number P-19676 in the USDA seal on the front and a "use by" date earlier than "28 MAY 2007" on the back.



Recycle Works has collected more than 22 million pounds of material since the first center opened in 1990.

What's hazardous? Look for the words "Warning" or "Danger" on the product label. These items should be handled carefully, according to the label, and brought to the collection. Improper disposal of leftover chemicals (down the drain, in storm sewers, on the ground, or in regular household trash) can pose a public health risk and be especially harmful to the environment. Protect yourself and your family's health

by purchasing less toxic products: look for the word "Caution" on the label when you shop.

Collections are for St. Charles County residents only. Businesses and non-profit groups are prohibited by law from participating. Get more details and a list of items accepted at www.scchealth.org/es.

Don't Lose Sleep Over Daylight Saving Time

Thanks to a new law, Daylight Saving Time (DST) now begins earlier and ends later in the year. Clocks will "spring forward" one hour on Sunday, March 11.

That "lost hour" of sleep calls to mind the health effects of inadequate rest. Adults need eight to nine hours of sleep a night, but most get less than seven hours. By short-changing your sleep, you could be putting yourself at risk of obesity, heart disease, and depression.

To pave the way to better sleep, experts recommend these sleep tips:

- Establish consistent sleep and wake schedules, even on weekends
- Create a regular, relaxing bedtime routine such as soaking in a hot bath or listening to soothing music
- Create a sleep-conducive environment that is dark, quiet, comfortable and cool
- Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillows
- Keep "sleep stealers" such as TV or the computer out of your bedroom
- Finish eating at least two to three hours before your regular bedtime
- Exercise regularly during the day or at least a few hours before bedtime
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol products close to bedtime and give up smoking



“100% Fad Free”

March is National Nutrition Month



MyPyramid.gov

STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

Diet fads come and go, and some may help you lose weight in the short term. For National Nutrition Month 2007, the American Dietetic Association (ADA) says the most effective long-term way to achieve a healthful lifestyle is to be “100% Fad Free.”

“You can lose weight on virtually any diet,” says reg-

istered dietitian and ADA spokesperson Roberta Anding. “If you eat less, you will lose weight. The question is, can you maintain a healthy lifestyle over the long term – your life? The real key to reaching long-term goals is to focus on your overall health.”

Through National Nutrition Month, created in 1973, the ADA promotes healthful eating by providing practical nutrition guidance and focusing attention on making informed food choices and developing sound physical activity habits. Keep these tips in mind to help you live a “100% Fad Free” lifestyle.

Develop an eating plan for lifelong health. Too often, people adopt the latest food fad rather than focusing on overall health. Get back to basics and use the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPyramid as your guide to healthy eating.

Choose foods sensibly by looking at the big picture. A single food or meal won’t make or break a healthful diet. When consumed in moderation in appropriate portions, all foods can fit into a healthful diet.

Learn how to spot a food fad. Unreasonable or exaggerated claims that eating (or not eating) specific foods, nutrient supplements or combinations of foods may cure disease or offer quick weight loss are key features of fad diets.

Find your balance between food and physical activity. Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness plus it helps control body weight, promotes a feeling of well-being and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

Remember, food and nutrition misinformation can have harmful effects on your health and well-being, as well as your wallet. For more information about healthy eating, visit www.MyPyramid.gov.

“Walk & Roll” Your Way to Health

“Walk & Roll for a Healthy Life” is a health promotion program offered by Healthy Communities to businesses, municipalities, non-profits, and civic organizations in St. Charles County.

By changing a just few habits in your daily routine, you can maintain a healthy weight, boost your fitness levels, lower your stress and blood pressure, and reduce your risk for diabetes and heart disease

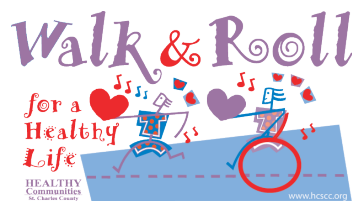
Through “Walk & Roll,” participants will learn to track their steps, how to gradually increase the number of steps they take every day, and how to improve their level of fitness. “Walk & Roll” is for everyone regardless of age, health status or physical ability.

The goal of “Walk & Roll” is to track if walking regularly improves participant’s blood pressure, cholesterol, and body mass index.

All activities count. Participants can walk, roll their wheelchair, garden, play ball, whatever they like. They keep track of their active time or distance and log it in the “Walk & Roll” book.

Then they report their monthly totals online.

Participants can obtain two health screenings, before and after the program. For information on how you can get your organization started, call Missy Fallert, Project Director, at 636-410-0381.



4TH ANNUAL
PET ADOPTION CENTER
GOLF TOURNAMENT

Sunday, April 29
Mid Rivers Golf Course
4100 Mid Rivers Mall Dr.
St. Peters

CALL 636-949-7387
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Helpful Phone Numbers		
Division of Public Health	636-949-7400	Division of Emergency Management
Health Education	636-949-7401	636-949-3023
Vital Records	636-949-7558	Division of Environmental Services
STD Prevention/Treatment	636-949-7401	Recycling Services
Environmental Health	636-949-7404	636-949-7415
WIC	636-949-7402	Division of Humane Services
		Animal Control
		636-949-7387
		636-949-7347