



Worst pollen season in 25 years

Allergies Hitting Hard

Our mild spring has led to an overabundance of pollen in the air. Experts say this is the worst season for pollen that St. Louis has seen in more than two decades. Many people who never before suffered from seasonal allergies are flooding doctors' offices, and those who already had allergies have it even worse.

But what are allergies? Simply put, allergies are an overreaction of the immune system to a foreign substance that is breathed in, eaten, injected, or touched. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include coughing, sneezing, itchy eyes, runny nose, and a scratchy throat. In severe cases, allergies can lead to hives, rashes, difficulty breathing, or even death.

The high airborne spore counts are also making life miserable for people with asthma. In fact, the [Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America](#) (AAFA) has ranked St. Louis number two in the nation in its "Asthma Capitals" listing for 2010.

It's estimated that one in four Americans, or about 75 million people, have seasonal allergies or asthma. These diseases cannot be cured, but symptoms can be reduced by



1. Richmond, VA	6. Memphis
2. St. Louis	7. Tulsa, OK
3. Chattanooga, TN	8. Philadelphia
4. Knoxville, TN	9. Augusta, GA
5. Milwaukee	10. Atlanta

avoiding contact with pollen or other triggers. Prescription or over-the-counter medications can also be helpful.

Prevention is also key to avoiding an asthma attack or an allergic reaction. If you are sensitive to pollen, try to limit outdoor activity during periods when the pollen or mold count is high. This will reduce the amount of allergens you inhale. If possible, keep windows closed and use your air conditioner set on the "recirculate" mode.

In general, spore counts are highest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. If you have a yard, try to wait until mid-evening to mow, and keep your grass cut down to two inches to prevent grass pollen from being kicked up into the wind.

If you do need to work outside during periods of high pollen or mold spore counts, try wearing an approved face mask, hat, safety glasses, gloves, and a long-sleeve shirt. Be sure to shower thoroughly and change your clothes after coming inside. Wash your hair well, as pollen and other allergens can easily "hide" there.

For more information on allergies and asthma, visit the AAFA's website at www.AAFA.org.

From the Director



Gil Copley

As May arrives, so do mosquitoes. In fact, our department has already been receiving calls complaining of mosquitoes in some residential areas of the county. It is always hard to predict how severe a mosquito season will be. It not only depends on a combination of rain and warmer weather but the timing of the rainfall and how hard it rains can make a big difference. "Gully-washers" can flush away developing larvae while gentler rains may just keep everything nice and wet, creating a real mosquito nursery.

In Missouri, we begin with nuisance mosquitoes that are voracious biters and make life miserable if they are present in large numbers. In late June or early July to the first hard freeze we see growing populations of mosquito species that are capable of transmitting disease to humans. Below is some information that I provided four years ago that still is good advice. Consider it and consider your options.

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



Household Hazardous Waste Collections Underway

Do you have old, unused chemicals tucked away around your home? The Department of Community Health and the Environment is helping St. Charles County residents dispose of these dangerous substances through monthly household hazardous waste collection events at Recycle Works Central. The facility is located at 60 Triad South Drive in St. Charles. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday.



Household hazardous waste accepted during the monthly collection events includes motor oil, antifreeze, gasoline and other fuels, pesticides, herbicides, solvents, aerosols, batteries, and pool chemicals. For a complete list of items accepted, visit our website at www.scchealth.org/es or call (636) 949-7415. Collection events are scheduled for May 29, June 26, July 31, August 28, and September 25.

Household hazardous waste collection events are for St. Charles County residents only. Businesses and non-profit groups are prohibited by law from participating. Proof of residency, such as a driver's license or tax bill, is required. Limits may apply to certain items. Unacceptable items include latex paint, explosives and ammunition, radioactive waste, medical waste, pressurized gas cylinders, household trash, and tires.

Live Well Expo Coming to O'Fallon

Healthier living doesn't have to be a chore. There are many simple changes that are easily within our reach, even with today's hectic lifestyles. However, it can be hard sometimes to find a "one stop shop" for this kind of information.

The Live Well O'Fallon Coalition is working to change that. The first ever "Live Well Expo" takes place on Saturday, June 5 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Renaud Spirit Center, 2650 Tri-Sports Drive in O'Fallon. This regional healthy living event will feature cooking demonstrations, gardening and fitness tips, educational workshops, children's activities, and entertainment. There will also be blood glucose screening, a blood drive, and body mass index (BMI) screening. The celebration is free and open to all residents of St. Charles County.



Support for the expo comes to the city of O'Fallon courtesy of a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) initiative called "Healthy Communities." The goal of the program is to reduce the incidence of chronic disease in the community. To that end, the Live Well Expo is designed to show people in our community how to eat, play, and grow into a healthier lifestyle. Everyone is invited to come early and "stay the day." For more information on the Live Well Expo, call (636) 978-7997 or e-mail livewellofallon@gmail.com.

Seniors Invited to Health Forum on May 18

May is Older Americans Month, an observance started in 1963 to honor the legacy and ongoing contributions of seniors and support them as they enter the next stage in life.

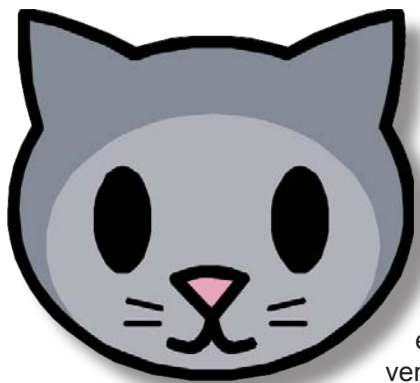
As part of the celebration, the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment is hosting a forum for seniors in our community titled "Get the Facts on Identity Theft, Insurance, and Medicare." The meeting takes place at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, May 18 at the health department, 1650 Boone's Lick Road in St. Charles. Travis Ford, communications director for the Missouri Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions, and Professional Registration will present timely, accurate information about issues older people face. There will also be time set aside for attendees to ask questions.

Space is limited, so register today by calling (636) 949-7413 or register via e-mail at hmailam@sccmo.org. To find out more about Older Americans Month, log on to www.eldercare.gov or call 1-800-677-1116.



Pets and People – Healthy Together

Exercise is important, for people and their pets. That's why the St. Charles County Division of Humane Services is joining with the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#) (AVMA) and other organizations throughout the United States to promote National Pet Week, May 2 through 8. The theme this year is "Pets and People – Healthy Together."

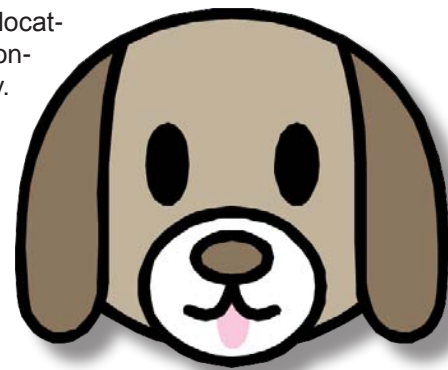


Pets provide many physical and emotional health benefits to their owners. Research has shown that people who own pets are happier, have lower blood pressure, and are generally in better health. However, just like humans, pets can gain weight if they don't exercise. The AVMA says that 44% of dogs and 57% of cats in the United States are overweight or obese. By focusing on the importance of exercise for people and pets during National Pet Week 2010, we can start to reverse this trend.

If you don't own a pet yet, the St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center is a great place to look. There are many types, breeds, and sizes of pets just waiting for a new home. The center is located at 4850 Mid Rivers Mall Drive in St. Peters, convenient to just about anywhere in St. Charles County. Hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Saturday

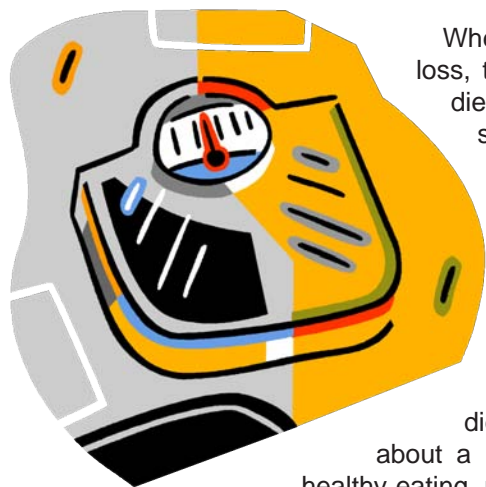
10 a.m. to 4 p.m..

Since the Pet Adoption Center opened in 1999, more than 23,000 pets have found their "forever families" through the center. In addition to pet adoptions, the St. Charles County Division of Humane Services offers educational programs for new and prospective pet owners. To learn more about these programs, call (636) 949-PETS (7387). For more information about National Pet Week, log on to www.petweek.org.



Healthy Weight

It's not a diet, it's a lifestyle



When it comes to weight loss, there's no lack of fad diets promising fast results. But such diets limit your nutritional intake, can be unhealthy, and tend to fail in the long run.

The key to achieving and maintaining a healthy weight isn't about short-term dietary changes. It's

about a lifestyle that includes healthy eating, regular physical activity,

and balancing the number of calories you consume with the number of calories your body uses.

A healthy eating plan that helps you manage your weight includes a variety of foods or methods of preparation you may not have considered. Instead of reaching for an apple or banana, why not try a more exotic fruit like a mango or cherimoya? When cooking vegetables, try grilling or steaming them with fresh herbs instead of boiling with butter. And instead of frying chicken or fish, try oven baking or grilling.

Physical activity is also important. When you're trying to lose weight, it's a simple formula: calories in should be less

than calories out. Burning calories through physical activity, combined with reducing the number of calories you eat, creates a "calorie deficit" that results in weight loss.

To lose weight and keep it off, you will need a high amount of physical activity unless you also adjust your diet and reduce the amount of calories you're eating and drinking. Getting to and staying at a healthy weight requires both regular physical activity and a healthy eating plan. To maintain your weight, work your way up to 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, or an equivalent mix of the two each week.

For more information on healthy lifestyles, including weight management, visit www.cdc.gov/healthyweight.

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

H1N1 Flu: One Year Later

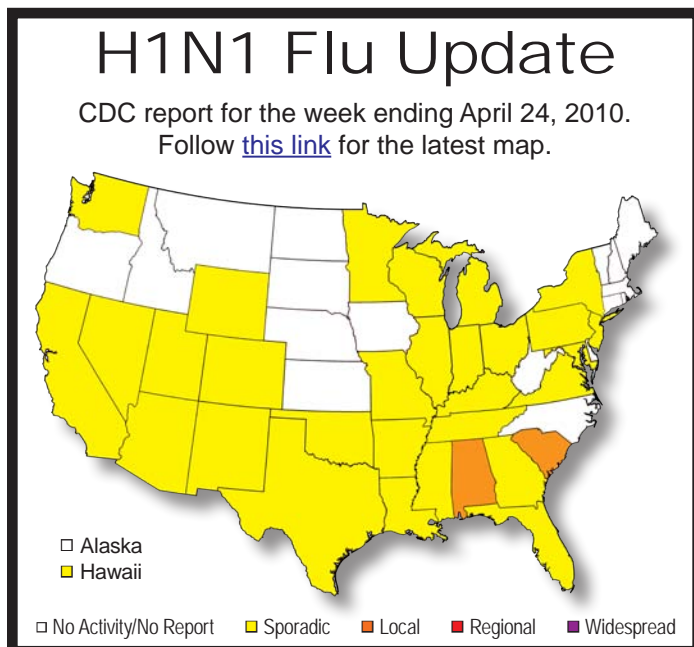
Adapted from Flu.gov

On the first anniversary of the discovery of the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus, it's important to look at the future of pandemic planning and how local and state health departments can work with the federal government to improve the way we plan and respond. We've learned from this experience about protecting the American people from threats – man-made or made by Mother Nature.

This pandemic has proven that the vaccine technology we depend on needs to be supplemented with new, faster, more flexible manufacturing methods. In addition, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is conducting a review that will help improve the nation's approach to medical countermeasures – the vaccines and treatments needed to respond to the known and unknown pathogens we could face in the future – from identifying which countermeasures are needed to initial research and development to advanced research and development to production to stockpiling and, finally, to distribution. The review is expected to be complete by late spring or early summer.

HHS is also improving pandemic and all-hazards planning to help communities become more resilient in the face of health emergencies. During the H1N1 pandemic we developed outstanding partnerships with an array of stakeholders. Everywhere, people rolled up their sleeves and worked together in some incredibly innovative ways.

We want to build on those partnerships and use that energy and creativity to accomplish our common mission so our nation and its people are prepared for, protected from, and resilient in the face of health threats or incidents with potentially negative health consequences.







 national
women's
health week

May 9-15, 2010

CELEBRATE

National Women's Health Week

-  Make sure your health screenings are up to date
-  Aim for 2 1/2 hours of physical activity per week
-  Eat healthy foods
-  Take time to focus on you

For more information about celebrating National Women's Health Week, visit <http://www.womenshealth.gov/whw> or call 1-800-994-9662 or TDD: 1-888-220-5446.

Low Cost Vaccination Clinic

**SATURDAY, MAY 8 9 AM - 12 PM AT THE
PET ADOPTION CENTER**

Prices:

Rabies 1 yr \$5.00
Rabies 3 yr \$10.00

Rabies Tag (required for St. Charles County
Residents)

Spayed/Neutered \$5.00
Unaltered \$10.00

FVRCP \$10.00
DHLPP \$10.00

Heartworm Testing \$15.00
Microchipping \$10.00



Heartworm Preventative:
12 Months Supply

Blue (up to 25 lbs.) \$25.00
Green (26-50 lbs.) \$35.00
Brown (51-100 lbs.) \$40.00



*4850 Mid Rivers Mall Dr.
St. Peters, MO 63376
(636) 949-7387
www.scchealth.org*