

# Public Health

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## Table of Contents

Calling the Shots	2
Safety First When Handling Fireworks	3
Fun in the Sun But At What Cost?	4
Discovering Fun Close to Home	6
Calendar of Events	6

## Message from the Director



On July 2, 2009 we will dedicate our new WIC clinic which will be located at the new Jordan Valley Community Health Center on Tampa Street. This effort is a culmination of many years of dedicated work by community health advocates to strengthen our health safety net and collaboratively work to improve the health of our community. Back in the early 1990's a group of concerned citizens calling themselves Advocates for a Healthy Community and working under the umbrella of the United Way of the Ozarks came together to plan for the development of a federal grant that would establish a federally qualified health center in Springfield, Missouri. The first two attempts were unsuccessful but this group was undeterred by their initial failures and was committed to the cause. Finally the grant was approved over 10 years after the first planning efforts began. In six short years after the establishment of the Jordan Valley Community Health Center it is truly unbelievable the growth that has occurred and the improved access that has been provided for dental and medical services for the most needy in our community.

The coordinated effort of our WIC services and the comprehensive preventative health services offered by Jordan Valley Community Health Center will complement each other and will provide seam-less, comprehensive health services in one location. This effort would have not been possible without the vision of those committed individuals that began this journey over nearly two decades. If you have some time I would urge you all to visit our new facility. I think you will agree when you see it that vision is a wonderful thing.

Yours in good health,

## News and Technology

### FDA weighs options to reduce painkiller overdoses

Tylenol, Excedrin, NyQuil. These household brands and others have come to symbolize safe, convenient relief from the aches and pains of everyday life. But this week the Food and Drug Administration is focusing on a seldom-discussed side effect of the medications: severe liver damage.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=106036794>

## Calling the Shots

The summer always seems to go by fast and before you know it, it's time for children to go back-to-school. Before returning to school parents need to be sure that their children are up-to-date with their immunizations.

While the majority of a child's vaccinations will be given by the age of 2, children need to have booster shots before entering kindergarten. The vaccinations that are required before kindergarten are booster doses of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (Dtap), polio, measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), and the chickenpox vaccine. A child may be exempt from receiving the varicella (chickenpox) vaccination with a statement signed by the parent, guardian, or physician indicating the month and year the child had chickenpox. If a child has not received the hepatitis A vaccine it may be administered at this time also.

Immunity from some childhood vaccines can decrease over time, and adolescents are at greater risk for catching certain diseases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention currently recommends three vaccines when a child is 11-12 years old. If your child is older and has not received the tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap), meningococcal vaccine, and the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine; they should receive them as soon as possible. The hepatitis A and the chickenpox vaccines may also be administered at this time, if needed.

A complete list of vaccinations required before children may enter Missouri child care facilities or schools can be found by visiting the Springfield-Greene County Health Department Web site at <http://www.springfieldmo.gov/health>.

The benefits of protecting children against vaccine-preventable diseases far outweigh the temporary discomfort and low risk of side effects from the shots. Vaccines not only protect the vaccinated individuals from developing potentially serious disease, they also help protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of disease.

All required vaccinations for daycare and school are provided at no cost at the Westside Public Health Center, located at 660 S. Scenic Avenue, Springfield, Missouri. There is a walk-in clinic every Tuesday morning from 7:30-10:00 am. Parents can also make an appointment by calling (417) 874-1220.

## Safety First When Handling Fireworks

The Fourth of July holds special meaning to most Americans. It stands for freedom and all the things we hold dear. As a result, American families celebrate the holiday in many ways. Perhaps a picnic in the park complete with a red and white checkered tablecloth or a day at the lake slathering on sunscreen followed by an evening under the stars watching as the fireworks color the sky.

However, you choose to celebrate the Fourth of July, please take extra precautions to avoid unintentional firework injury and help assure a safe holiday. The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that in 2007 more than 9 thousand people were treated in emergency rooms for injuries resulting from fireworks. More than half of these injuries were to the hands, eyes and legs and children ages 10-14 suffered the highest per capita injury rate among all age groups.

When considering the purchase of fireworks, first check with the your local authorities as many cities and towns (including Springfield) have ordinances prohibiting the sell and/or use of consumer fireworks within their jurisdiction.

If fireworks are legal in your area and you choose to celebrate with them, the CPSC recommends you follow these guidelines:

- Do not allow young children to play with fireworks under any circumstances. Sparklers, considered by many to be a "safe" firework for the young, burn at very high temperatures and can easily ignite clothing. Children do not understand the danger and cannot act appropriately in an emergency situation.
- Older children should only be permitted to use fireworks under the close supervision of an adult. Running and horseplay should not be allowed as it can increase the risk of injury.
- Always light fireworks outdoors away from houses, buildings, dry leaves or grass or any flammable materials.
- Keep a bucket of water nearby in case of an emergency and for dousing fireworks that don't go off.
- Do not try to relight or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Instead douse and soak them in water and dispose of them in the trash.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Never ignite fireworks in a container, especially a glass or metal one.
- Keep unused fireworks away from firing areas.
- Store fireworks in a dry, cool place. Check instructions for special storage directions.
- Observe all local laws.
- Never have any part of your body directly over a firework while lighting.
- Don't experiment with homemade fireworks.

To assure ultimate safety, consider attending one of the many community or church sponsored fireworks displays offered in your area.

### Little Known Facts About Fireworks

The invention of gunpowder occurred approximately 2 thousand years ago. Exploding firecrackers were produced later during the Song dynasty (960-1279) by a Chinese monk named Li Tian.

These first firecrackers were bamboo shoots filled with gunpowder.

The loud noise created by the explosion was favored in religious fireworks as it was thought to frighten the spirits.

Originally fireworks were used in New Year's Day celebrations.

With the dawning of the 15th century, fireworks had become a traditional part of many other celebrations including military victories and weddings.

Source:<http://chemistry.about.com>



## Summer Car Safety

Each year children suffer irreversible brain damage or death from heat exposure when left in unattended vehicles.

When it is 93° F outside, the temperature inside a car can rise to 125° F after 20 minutes and 140° F after 40 minutes.

Source: North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

A car parked in DIRECT sunlight can reach temperatures of 131° - 171° F in 15 minutes.

Source: National Safe Kids, 1999

To help assure that you remove infants and children from the vehicle when you reach your destination, place the diaper bag or other form of reminder by your purse or briefcase on the front seat.

After the car has been parked in the heat, verify the carseat and seat buckles aren't too hot before placing and securing your child.

## Fun in the Sun but at What Cost?

In the midst of the warm summer months we can find ourselves occupied with tending to the garden, engaging in favorite sporting activities, or embarking on that long desired home improvement. Whatever it is you want to accomplish, remember the summer's high temperatures can result in a variety of heat-related illnesses.

Although heat-related illnesses are preventable, the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports from 1979-2003, excessive heat was responsible for the deaths of approximately 8 thousand people in the United States. This is more than the combined total of those who died from hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods and earthquakes.

While everyone can be effected by heat-related illness some segments of the population are more at risk. These groups include the elderly, the young, those with mental illness, and those who have a chronic health condition.

*Excessive heat claimed more U.S. lives between 1979-2003 than hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods and earthquakes combined.*

Heat-related illnesses include heat cramps, heat exhaustion and the most serious, heat stroke.

Heat cramps described as muscle pains or spasms most often affect the abdomen, arms and legs and occur with strenuous physical activity. Take the following steps to alleviate the symptoms:

- Stop all activity and rest in a cool place.
- Drink clear juice or a sports beverage.
- Do not return to strenuous activity for a few hours after the cramps subside, as further activity may lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.
- Seek medical attention if symptoms do not go away within one hour.

Heat exhaustion can develop after exposure to high temperatures for several days and the inadequate replacement of fluids. Heat exhaustion is the body's reaction to excessive loss of water and salt through sweating. Warning signs include:

- Heavy sweating
- Paleness
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fainting



According to the CDC, skin may be cool and moist, pulse rate will be fast and weak, and breathing will be fast and shallow. If heat exhaustion is left untreated, it may progress to heat stroke. Seek medical attention immediately if symptoms are severe or the victim has heart

## Fun in the Sun... (continued)

problems or high blood pressure. The following cooling measures may be effective:

- Drink cool, nonalcoholic beverages
- Rest
- Take a cool shower, bath or sponge bath
- Go to an air-conditioned environment
- Put on lightweight clothing

Heat stroke occurs when the body's sweating mechanism fails, allowing body temperature to rise rapidly without the ability to cool down. Heat stroke can result in death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not administered. Warning signs of heat stroke include:

- An extremely high body temperature (above 103° F orally)
- Skin that is red, hot and dry (no sweating)
- A pulse that is rapid and strong
- A throbbing headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Unconsciousness



The CDC warns if any of these symptoms are present, you may be dealing with a life-threatening emergency so have someone call for immediate medical assistance while you do the following:

- Move the victim to a shady area.
- Cool the victim rapidly using whatever methods you can. For example: immerse them in a tub of cool water; place them in a cool shower; spray them down with a garden hose; sponge them with cool water; or if the humidity is low, wrap them in a cool, wet sheet and fan him or her vigorously.
- Monitor body temperature, and continue cooling efforts until body temperature drops to 101°-102° F.
- Do not give the victim anything to drink.
- Get medical assistance as soon as possible.

Recognizing the symptoms of heat-related illnesses and acting quickly can save lives, but prevention is still the best weapon against heat and its adverse effects on the body. By following the common sense prevention tips below heat-related illnesses can be avoided.

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Replace salt and minerals lost from sweating.
- Wear appropriate clothing and sunscreen.
- Schedule outdoor activities in the morning or evening when temperatures are cooler.
- Pace yourself by starting slowly and taking rest breaks.
- Stay in the air conditioning. If your home is not air-conditioned consider visiting a mall or your local library.
- Use the buddy system. If working outside check on co-workers and ask them to return the favor. Also call or visit elderly family or friends twice daily when the mercury soars.

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention



## Under the Microscope

West Nile is a mosquito-borne virus that can cause encephalitis (*inflammation of the brain*) or meningitis (*inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord*).

### How is West Nile Virus Spread?

West Nile Virus is spread to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. The disease is not spread through person to person contact.

### What Can I Do to Reduce My Risk of Becoming Infected With West Nile Virus?

From April to October when mosquitoes are the most active, it is advisable to:

- Limit your outdoor activities at dawn and dusk.
- Wear protective clothing such as long pants, loose-fitting, long sleeved shirts and socks and consider the use of an insect repellent containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide) if you will be in an area with tall grass, weeds or bushes. *Remember:* To always follow manufacturers directions.

### What Can I Do Around My Home to Help Reduce Exposure to Mosquitoes?



Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing or slow moving water so it is very important to eliminate these breeding grounds.

- Remove waste and old tires.
- Dispose of tin-cans, discarded toys, plastic containers, empty ceramic pots and other water-holding containers.
- Assure roof gutters drain properly.
- Change the water in stock tanks and birdbaths every 3-4 days.
- Turn over plastic wading pools, wheelbarrows and canoes when not in use.
- Educate and assist neighbors - especially the elderly to remove breeding sites on their property.

## Calendar

### July 4 CLOSED - INDEPENDENCE DAY

July 14	Food Handlers Safety Class	227 E. Chestnut Expwy	2:00pm-4:00pm	Register at 864-1667
July 14	Ozarks HELP (Herpes) Support Group	3850 N. National, 4th Floor	7:00pm	Learn more 864-1303
July 14	Childcare Provider Education "Supporting Breastfeeding Families in Child Care"	660 S. Scenic	7:00pm-8:00pm	Register at 864-1571
	"Building a Healthy Brain"	660 S. Scenic	8:10pm-9:10pm	Register at 864-1571
Aug. 11	Ozarks HELP (Herpes) Support Group	3850 N. National, 4th Floor	7:00pm	Learn more 864-1303
Aug. 11	Childcare Provider Education "We Can Too" Children with Disabilities	660 S. Scenic	7:00pm-9:10pm	Register at 864-1571
Aug. 12	Food Handlers Safety Class	227 E. Chestnut Expwy	8:30am-10:30am	Register at 864-1667
<b>Sept.7 CLOSED - LABOR DAY</b>				
Sept. 8	Food Handlers Safety Class	227 E. Chestnut Expwy	2:00pm-4:00pm	Register at 864-1667
Sept. 8	Ozarks HELP (Herpes) Support Group	3850 N. National, 4th Floor	7:00pm	Learn more 864-1303
Sept. 8	Childcare Provider Education "Growth and Development - Identifying Mental Health Issues"	660 S. Scenic	7:00pm-8:00pm	Register at 864-1571
	"Think Safety First! - Accident Prevention"	660 S. Scenic	8:00pm-9:10pm	Register at 864-1571

Events are free unless otherwise noted.

## Discovering Fun Close to Home

Having difficulty getting away? Concerned about your carbon footprint? Want a much deserved break without spending a small fortune? If you answered yes to any of these questions, just remember how important it is to take some time for yourself. How you ask? Consider taking a "staycation". This is a home-based vacation and can be a great alternative to the one or two-week expensive vacation. The big savings from a home-based vacation are the reduced transportation and lodging costs.



Springfield and the surrounding area offer many tennis courts and bike trails with many of them free or low-cost. Within a short drive are lovely state and county parks where opportunities for kayaking, canoeing, sailing and fishing are plentiful. Branson is just 45-minutes away and has an array of variety shows for the whole family, not to mention Silver Dollar City and White Water.

If you'd like to save even more and experience a nostalgic evening, why not pop yourself a bag of low-fat popcorn, throw in a couple bottles of water, splurge on some candy and make your way over to the drive-in theatre in Aurora or Seymour. The price is less than the admission for two at the indoor cinemas.

Whatever you choose to do, keep in mind, the time you spend with loved ones creating lasting memories is more important than the actual activity.

Public Health E-Magazine is a publication of the Springfield-Greene County Health Department. Kevin Gipson, Director of Health; Clay Goddard, Assistant Director of Health; Kendra Williams, Administrator of Community Health and Epidemiology; Pam Bryant, Administrator of Maternal, Child and Family Health. Story contributions made by: Tammy Burnett, Leslie Davis and Cathy Gaw. Springfield-Greene County Health Department, 227 E. Chestnut Expressway, Springfield, MO 65802, (417) 864-1658. Copyright © 2005 SGCHD. All rights reserved. Information in this publication is not intended for the purpose of diagnosing or prescribing. Consult your physician or health care provider before undertaking any form of medical treatment and/or advice contained in this publication. For additional information, contact Rebecca Ray, 874-1297.

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The Springfield-Greene County Health Department is committed to helping people live longer, healthier, happier lives.

