

Family and Consumer Sciences

Hoke County Center

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June Marks the Beginning of Hurricane Season

Don't be caught off guard. Never take for granted that a disaster will not happen here. Our thoughts go out to the victims in Oklahoma. What would you do if this happened to you, would you be prepared? History teaches that a lack of hurricane awareness and preparation are common threads among all major hurricane disasters. By knowing your vulnerability and what actions you should take, you can reduce the effects of a hurricane disaster.

Hurricane hazards can be in many forms, including storm surge, heavy rainfall, inland flooding, high winds, tornadoes, and rip currents. The National Weather Service is responsible for protecting life and property through issuance of timely watches and warnings but it is essential that your family be ready before a storm approaches.

A watch lets you know that weather conditions are favorable for a hazard to occur. It literally means, "be on guard." During a weather watch, gather awareness of the specific threat and prepare for action – monitor the weather to find out if severe weather conditions have deteriorated and discuss your protective action plans with your family.

A warning requires immediate action. This means a weather hazard is imminent – it is either occurring (for example: a tornado has been spotted) or it is about to occur at any moment. During a weather warning, it is important to take action. Grab the emergency kit you have prepared in advance and head to safety immediately. Both watches and warnings are important, but warnings are more urgent.

Two keys to weather safety are to **prepare** for the risks and to **act** on those preparations when alerted by emergency officials. These are essential pieces to the Weather-Ready Nation.

Refer to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) www.ready.gov/hurricanes for comprehensive information on hurricane preparedness at home and in your community.

Gather Information

Know if you live in an evacuation area. Assess your risks and know your home's vulnerability to storm surge, flooding, and wind. Understand National Weather Service forecast products and especially the meaning of NWS watches and warnings.

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Contact your local National Weather Service office and local government/emergency management office. Find out what type of emergencies could occur and how you should respond.

Contacts

Keep a list of contact information for reference.

- County Law Enforcement
- County Public Safety Fire/Rescue
- State, County and City/Town Government
- Local Hospitals
- Local Utilities
- Local American Red Cross
- Local TV Stations
- Local Radio Stations
- Your Property Insurance Agent

Plan and Take Action

Everyone needs to be prepared for the unexpected. Your friends and family may not be together when disaster strikes. How will you find each other? Will you know if your children or parents are safe? You may have to evacuate or be confined to your home. What will you do if water, gas, electricity or phone services are shut off?

Kit Locations

Since you do not know where you will be when an emergency occurs, prepare

- Supplies for home, work, and vehicles
- Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept. Additionally, you may want to consider having supplies for sheltering for up to two weeks.
- Keep this kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly.
- This kit should be in one container, and ready to “grab and go” in case you are evacuated from your workplace.

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Manual can opener for food
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers, inverter or solar charger

In an emergency a family member or you yourself may suffer an injury. If you have these basic first aid supplies you are better prepared to help your loved ones when they are hurt.

Knowing how to treat minor injuries can make a difference in an emergency. You may consider taking a first aid class, but simply having the following things can help you stop bleeding, prevent infection and assist in decontamination.

- Two pairs of Latex or other sterile gloves if you are allergic to Latex
- Sterile dressings to stop bleeding
- Cleansing agent/soap and antibiotic towelettes
- Antibiotic ointment
- Burn ointment
- Adhesive bandages in a variety of sizes
- Eye wash solution to flush the eyes or as general decontaminant
- Thermometer
- Prescription medications you take every day such as insulin heart medicine and asthma inhalers. You should periodically rotate medicines to account for expiration dates.
- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment and supplies

Non-prescription drugs:

- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid
- Laxative

Other first aid supplies:

- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant

Once you have gathered the supplies for a basic emergency kit, you may want to consider adding the following items:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container. You can use the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit-EFFAK developed by Operation Hope, FEMA and Citizen Corps to help you organize your information.
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper – when diluted, nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils

- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

Emergency Plans

When waiting out a storm be careful, the danger may not be over yet. Be alert for **tornadoes** – they are often spawned by hurricanes.

Source: FEMA, National Weather Service Safety, American Red Cross

Fruits and Vegetables

“Eat your fruits and vegetables.” You’ve likely heard this statement since childhood. Research shows why it is good advice:

- Healthy diets rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases.
- Fruits and vegetables also provide essential vitamins and minerals, fiber, and other substances that are important for good health.
- Most fruits and vegetables are naturally low in fat and calories and are filling.

What counts as a Cup?

One cup refers to a common measuring cup. In general, 1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or 100% vegetable juice, or 2 cups of raw leafy greens can be considered as 1 cup from the vegetable group. One cup of fruit or 100% fruit juice, or ½ cup of dried fruit can be considered as 1 cup from the fruit group.

Examples of 1 cup



1 small apple



1 large banana



1 medium grapefruit



1 large orange



1 medium pear



1 small wedge watermelon



2 large or 3 medium plums



8 large strawberries



1 large bell pepper



12 baby carrots
(or 2 medium carrots)



1 large sweet potato



1 large ear of corn



1 medium potato



2 large stalks of celery



1 cup cooked greens or 2 cups raw spinach, collards, mustard greens, or turnip greens

- Visit the Fruit and Vegetable Calculator at www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/fruitsvegetables/howmany.html. Here you can calculate your fruit and vegetable recommendations based on your calorie needs for your age, sex, and activity level.

Strawberries are juicy, summery and delicious. Nutrient-rich and packed with antioxidants (like vitamin C), strawberries offer a wide range of health benefits, some of which may surprise you.

Here are 8 reasons you should add more strawberries to your diet:

1. **Strawberries boost immunity** – registered dietician Madeleine Edwards says, “Strawberries are an excellent source of vitamin C.” Most mammals, except for humans, have the ability to produce vitamin C naturally, which is why it’s so important to get your daily requirement. One serving of strawberries contains 51.5 mg of percent. Vitamin C is a well-known immunity booster, as well as a powerful, fast working antioxidant. Antioxidant power in strawberries becomes “ready to work in the blood” after eating the fruit for just a few weeks.
2. **Strawberries promote eye health** – The antioxidant properties in strawberries may also help to prevent cataracts-which can lead to blindness in older age. Our eyes require vitamin C to protect them from exposure to free radicals from the sun’s harsh UV rays, which can damage the protein in the lens. Vitamin C also plays an important role in strengthening the eye’s cornea and retina.
3. **Strawberries help fight cancer** – Vitamin C is one of the antioxidants that can help with cancer prevention, since a healthy immune system is the body’s best defense. A phytochemical called ellagic acid-also found in strawberries. Ellagic acid has been shown to yield anti-cancer properties like suppressing cancer cell growth.
4. **Strawberries keep wrinkles at bay** – The power of vitamin C in strawberries continues, as it is vital to the production of collagen, which helps to improve skin’s elasticity and resilience. Since we lose collagen as we age, eating foods rich in vitamin C may result in healthier, younger looking skin.
5. **Strawberries fight bad cholesterol** – Researchers at the Clinical Nutrition and Risk Factor Modification Center in Toronto studies the effect of strawberries on a cholesterol-lowering diet and concluded that adding strawberries to the diet reduced oxidative damage, as well as blood lipids-both of which a role in heart disease and diabetes.
6. **Strawberries reduce inflammation** – The antioxidants and phytochemicals found in strawberries may also help to reduce inflammation of the joints, which may cause arthritis and can also lead to heart disease. A study conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health shows that women who eat 16 or more strawberries per week are 14 percent less likely to have elevated levels of C-reactive protein (CRP) – an indication of inflammation in the body.
7. **Strawberries regulate blood pressure** – According to Alberta Health Services, potassium is yet another heart healthy nutrient and with 134 mg per serving, strawberries are considered a “medium source.” Strawberries are one of the best heart-healthy fruits you can eat.
8. **Strawberries aid in weight management** – Maintaining a healthy weight is one of the best defenses against type 2 diabetes and heart disease, as well as good for your overall well-being. “Strawberries are naturally low calorie (around 28k Cal per serving), fat-free and low in both sodium and sugar,” says Edwards. Strawberries do contain natural sugars – though total sugars are fairly low with 4 grams per serving – and the total carbohydrate content is equivalent to less than a half slice of bread.

Simply Delicious Strawberry Cake

1 (18.25-ounce) box white cake mix
1 (3-ounce) box strawberry-flavored instant gelatin
1 (15-ounce) package frozen strawberries in syrup, thawed and pureed
4 large eggs
½ cup vegetable oil
¼ cup water

Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease 2 (9 inch) round cake pans.

In a large bowl, combine cake mix and gelatin. Add pureed strawberries, eggs, oil, and water; beat at medium speed with an electric mixer until smooth. Pour into prepared pans, and bake for 20 minutes, or until a wooden pick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and cool completely on wire racks.

Strawberry Cream Cheese Frosting

¼ cup butter, softened
1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
1 (10-ounce) package frozen strawberries in syrup, thawed and pureed
½ teaspoon strawberry extract
7 cups confectioners' sugar
Freshly sliced strawberries, for garnish, optional

In a large bowl, beat butter and cream cheese at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Beat in ¼ cup of the strawberry puree and the strawberry extract. (The rest of the puree is leftover but can be used in smoothies or on ice cream for a delicious treat.) Gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until smooth.

Spread frosting in between layers, on top and sides of cake. Garnish with sliced strawberries, if desired.

Courtesy of Paula Deen

Fourth of July Safety Tips



Each year, especially during the early summer weeks around the Fourth of July, thousands of people are treated in emergency departments for fireworks-related injuries. While some are minor, many of these injuries are serious, for example, resulting in burns or blindness. In 2008, seven deaths from fireworks-related injuries were reported; perhaps these could have been prevented.

Children should **never** be allowed to use fireworks. Of the 9,800 fireworks-related injuries reported to the US Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) in 2007, almost half occurred in children under the age of 15.

All fireworks are dangerous – even sparklers – which cause the majority of fireworks-related injuries to children under the age of 5. Sparklers burn at very high temperatures (up to 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit), sending out sparks that can easily set clothes on fire and cause permanent eye damage.

Because the risk of injuries when using fireworks is so high, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) supports a nationwide ban on the private use of any and all fireworks. Instead, families should attend public fireworks displays, which are much less dangerous.

Fireworks safety

While a few states have banned all consumer fireworks, most have not. Until **every** state bans fireworks, the CPSC and the National Council of Fireworks Safety recommend taking the following safety precautions to make it less likely that these potentially dangerous devices will injure someone:

- Never allow children to touch fireworks of any kind, including sparklers even after they have “gone off.” It can be hot, or explosive and debris from fireworks can be extremely dangerous.
- Older teens should only be allowed to use fireworks under close adult supervision.
- Fireworks must never be used while drinking alcohol or using other drugs.
- Obey all local laws.
- If allowed in your area and you choose to do so, buy fireworks only from reliable sellers.
- Store fireworks in a dry, cool place.
- Only use fireworks outdoors and always have a good amount of water close by (a garden hose and a bucket), in case of emergency.
- Read and follow label directions.
- Light only one firework at a time.
- Never hold any part of your body directly over the firework while lighting it.
- Be sure all other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Never throw or point fireworks at anyone.
- Never light fireworks in a container, especially a metal or glass container.
- Never light fireworks near a house or building, dry leaves or grass, or any other materials that can catch on fire.
- Never re-light a “dud” firework. Instead, wait 15 to 20 minutes, then soak it in a bucket of water and throw it away.

Information contained in this article was adapted from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Home Energy Management

Top ten low cost/no cost tips for saving energy and money:

- 1. Control your thermostat.** You can save on your heating and cooling bill by keeping your thermostat at an energy efficient and comfortable setting during the day and adjusting the temperature a few degrees at night and when you are not home. During the colder months, try setting the thermostat at 68°F or less during the day and 60°F when you are away or sleeping. For cooling, set your thermostat as high as comfortable in the summer while still maintaining comfortable humidity levels. Because of the way heat pumps operate, it is best to operate a heat pump unit at a constant moderate setting or use a programmable thermostat specifically designed to work with heat pumps.
Remember, too, that a thermostat is not like a gas pedal on a car. Setting the temperature significantly higher or lower in order to heat or cool faster does not work. It will take the same amount of time to reach the temperature you want if you set the thermostat at your goal temperature and wait for the unit to do its work. Also, it's likely that if you take the gas pedal approach you will forget that you've made the dramatic adjustment and end up cooling or heating at a higher or lower temperature than you truly want.
- 2. Lower your water temperature.** Most water heaters are set at 140°F. This high setting is only needed if you have a dishwasher without a booster heater. To save 6 to 10 percent on your water-heating costs, turn the temperature down to 120°F (medium setting on a gas heater dial). Most electric heaters have both an upper and a lower thermostat to adjust.
- 3. Insulate your water heater.** If your water heater is located in an unheated location, such as a garage or attic, wrapping the tank in a blanket of glass fiber insulation. This action can help reduce heat loss by as much as 25 to 45 percent, resulting in a cost savings of 4 to 9 percent on your water-heating bill. Water heater insulation kits are available at your local hardware store or through your utility company. Insulation wraps and blankets are most appropriate for older water heaters and those located in unheated area. Some manufacturers do not recommend an insulation wrap for newer water heaters.

Safety tip: When adding insulation to your water heater, be sure to follow the installation directions. It is important not to block exhaust vents and air intakes on gas models, and thermostat access panels on electric heaters with insulation. If you have questions, concerns, or doubts about proper installation, contact a plumber for assistance.

4. Replace your showerhead. A standard showerhead uses up to 8 gallons of hot water per minute. Replacing your showerhead with a quality low-flow showerhead will allow you to use only 1-2 gallons of water per minute. Newer low-flow showerheads are able to maintain water pressure, while using significantly less water. Low-flow showerheads typically pay for themselves within a year. With low-flow showerheads you can save twice – both on your electric or gas bill and on your water use bill.

5. Wash clothes in cold water. About 90 percent of the energy used by washing machines goes toward water heating. Often, using hot water is unnecessary except for special loads such as diapers or stained work clothes. To save on energy costs, try washing in cold water, using cold water detergents, and wash full loads whenever possible. To save even more, on sunny days, use the clothesline instead of the dryer to dry your laundry.

6. Seal air leaks. If you feel warm or cold drafts in your home, particularly near wall outlets, windows, doors and fireplaces, then consider air sealing. On windows, use weatherstrip tape along the gap where the glass meets the frame. To stop leakage under exterior doors, install an inexpensive door sweep. If the door leaks around the entire frame, install foam weatherstripping with adhesive backing between the door and the frame.

Use caulk or foam to seal around door and window frames and holes around water pipes and plumbing fixtures. Use foam gaskets that fit behind the cover plates to seal air leaks around light switches and electrical outlets. Remember, every hole you seal means fewer drafts and a more comfortable, energy efficient home.

If you rarely use your fireplace, make sure the damper is closed and the opening is sealed. Another option is to use a chimney balloon. These are inflatable balloon like items that can be installed to help block air leakage in a used fireplace.

7. Install storm windows. Once you have sealed air leaks around your windows, you can double the insulating value by installing storm windows. Adding another layer of glass or plastic creates a dead air space, and trapped air is an excellent insulator.

Plastic film window kits are the lowest-cost option and can be easily installed on the inside of your existing windows. If installing exterior mounted storm windows, make certain that the weep hole is left open so that any moisture can escape.

8. Regularly clean or replace your filter. All forced air furnaces and central air conditioners have air filters that filter particulates such as dust and dirt. Filters serve two purposes – to protect the unit and to help with the air quality in the home. If not periodically cleaned and replaced, dirty filters can greatly affect the heating and cooling ability of your unit and waste valuable energy. Some filters are disposable while others are washable and reusable. It's important to know what kind of filter you have and not reuse disposable filters. Check your filters each month and clean or replace them as needed.

9. Monitor your refrigerator. Refrigerators make up about 3 to 5 percent of your home's total energy use. To keep out warm room air, keep the refrigerator door closed as much as possible. Make certain that door gaskets have a tight fit. To test the fit, close a dollar bill in the door and try to pull it out. If it falls out or can be removed easily, you need to remove and replace the gasket. To help with energy savings, regularly clean dust out of the coils and defrost the freezer. Keep the refrigerator at 32-40°F (below 41°F for food safety) and the freezer at 0°F. If you have more than one refrigerator or freezer and one doesn't get much use, unplug it and save.

10. Contact your utility company. Your utility company may have programs to help their customers save money and energy including time of use rates and load management credits. With time of use rates, you will pay a higher price for the electricity you use during peak hours. Peak hours are those times when electricity is in high demand. If you can adjust your greatest electrical use to non-peak hours, you will save money. Some utility companies offer load management credits that provide monetary credit on your electric bill. With load management, the customer allows the utility company to install a load management switch on their major electrical appliances such as central air conditioning, electric water heater or electric heat strips. On those days when electrical power is in high demand, the utility turns off those controlled appliances for a few minutes at various intervals in order to reduce the demand on the electrical system.

Your utility company may offer additional incentives to help them control electrical loads and help you save money. Investigate the rebates and incentives offered by your utility company and figure out which are best for you.

Source: Adapted from Top Ten Tips, E3A: Energy Management for the Home, Montana State University Extension, 2013