

## Lubbock County Family Network



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June / July 2015

### **Still Many Myths about Wearing Seat Belts Click It or Ticket Campaign 2015: May 18-31**

When it comes to wearing your seat belts, some motorists may believe that they are protected by the size of their vehicle, their seating position, or where they are driving. Truth is that wearing a seat belt is the best way to protect yourself and your passengers in a crash. Fortunately, most Texans now buckle up, but some groups of motorists still are not taking the message to heart and are not consistently using seat belts. Let's look at the myths about wearing a seat belt.

*Vehicle type:* There seems to be a misconception among those who drive and ride in pickup trucks that their large vehicles will protect them more than other vehicles in crashes. But the numbers say otherwise. Sixty-three percent of pickup truck occupants who were killed were not buckled up. That is compared to 43% of passenger car occupants who were killed while not wearing their seat belts. Regardless of vehicle type, seat belt use is the single-most effective way to stay alive in a crash.

*Seating position:* Too many people wrongly believe they are safe in the back seat unrestrained. Half of all front-seat occupants killed in crashes in 2012 were unrestrained, but 61% of those killed in back seats were unrestrained.

*Rural versus urban locations:* People who live in rural areas might believe that their crash exposure is lower, but in 2013, there were 13,038 crash fatalities in rural locations, compared to 8,079 crash fatalities in urban locations. Out of those fatalities, 51% of those killed in rural locations were not wearing their seat belts, compared to 46% in urban locations.

While 9 out of 10 Texans buckle up, too many drivers and passengers continue to risk injury or death by not using seat belts. In 2014, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) reported 2,587 motor vehicle crashes in Texas in

which unrestrained vehicle occupants sustained fatal or serious injuries. Almost 3,500 (3,497) traffic deaths occurred in Texas in 2014 - up 3% from 2013. In 2014, of all people killed in vehicles in Texas, 44% were reported as not wearing a seat belt at the time of the crash.

After so many years of having seat belts standard in vehicles, it would seem that buckling your seat belt before driving off would be second nature. Fortunately, most of us do buckle up; but some, especially pickup truck drivers and their passengers, depend on their bigger pickup truck to protect them in a crash. Yet, pickup trucks are twice as likely to rollover as passenger cars, and pickup truck crashes can be especially serious – even deadly – due to their tendency to rollover and for unbelted occupants to be thrown from the vehicle.

Unbuckled passengers can also be deadly to others in the vehicle. Most people are not aware of the dangers posed by unbuckled backseat passengers. In a crash, they can become projectiles that are tossed around inside the vehicle, injuring or killing those in the front seat. Riders in the back seat who use lap and shoulder belts are 44% more likely to survive in a crash than unrestrained occupants in passenger cars, and 73% more likely to survive in passenger vans and SUVs.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), young adults are dying at a disproportionate rate because they are not wearing their seat belts. In 2014, 293 teen drivers and passengers (ages 15-20) died as a result of traffic crashes in Texas. Of those fatalities, 134 (46%) were not wearing their seat belts at the time of the crash.

When the “Click It or Ticket” campaign began in 2002, just 76% of Texans used seat belts. Today, more than 90% of Texans buckle up. NHTSA estimates that from 2002 to 2014, the campaign in Texas has resulted in over 4,300 fewer traffic fatalities (4,317), while preventing almost

73,000 serious injuries (72,926), and saving \$16.7 billion dollars in related economic costs.

Here is another good reason to buckle up – it's the law! Unbelted drivers and adult passengers can face fines and court costs of up to \$200. Children younger than 8 years old must be in a child safety seat or booster seat unless they are taller than 4 feet 9 inches. Fines issued to drivers for unrestrained children in their vehicle can be as high as \$250 plus court costs.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service reminds drivers that the "Click It or Ticket" campaign this year is scheduled for May 18-31, which includes Memorial Day weekend. During this time, extra law enforcement representatives will be on the roads enforcing the seat belt and child restraint laws in an effort to save lives. Those officers are not out to write tickets but instead want to help prevent the needless tragedy from motor vehicles accidents. Remember to buckle up and save your life – not just during Click It or Ticket, but every day of the year!



### May is Older Americans Month

When we think of the word "age," the most common thought is the number of years lived. However, as Americans continue to live longer, we also must think about how well they are living - how successfully they are aging. Since May is "Older Americans Month," Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service would like to provide some tips on successful aging so that the quality of your life will increase with its quantity.

The first step to aging successfully is to remain as physically healthy as possible for as long as possible. Mary Herridge, a Gerontologist and former County Extension Agent, points out that poor health is not a consequence of aging and being healthy is not just the absence of disease. "A chronic illness may be considered unhealthy but, if managed properly, the person suffering from that illness may be able to lead a normal, healthy life." A healthy lifestyle may have a positive impact on a person at any age. Proper diet, physical activity and preventive healthcare are three primary means to maintaining your physical health. According to Herridge, people interested in diet, exercise and prevention may contact the Extension Agent in their county for information on programs and services that are available at <http://counties.agrilife.org>.

Successful aging is also tied very heavily to a person's mental health. Just as with physical health, decline in mental health is not a consequence of growing older. "Many clinicians and family members attribute an altered mental state to someone's age rather than recognizing symptoms of a disease and seeking treatment for it," said Andy Crocker, Extension Program Specialist III-Gerontology and Health. Something as simple as the wrong prescription in a pair of glasses may cause disorientation, and then may be confused with dementia. Crocker recommends keeping the mind active through stimulating activity such as reading or word games or even talking with friends and neighbors about a current news event. As an added tip, Dr. Judy Warren, Professor and Special Initiatives Coordinator, suggests plenty of sleep in addition to any physical and mental activities. "Plenty of sleep nurtures the body and the mind," says Warren.

Emotional and spiritual well-being are key to any discussion regarding healthy aging. Social interaction is an important part of emotional health. Dr. Warren reminds us "to age well, we need to give and receive love." Whether it is through volunteerism or a group of friends who meet on a regular basis, staying involved in society gives a sense of purpose: a reason to get out of bed in the morning and to stay both mentally and physically healthy. "I don't think we realize that mental, physical and emotional health are all intertwined," said Herridge. "It's like a stool with three legs - if you take one leg away, the stool won't stand-up."

An excellent way to stay mentally healthy, as well as strengthen emotional health, is to participate in educational opportunities your community. "Most colleges and universities, and some school districts, offer a variety of classes that may be of interest to people of any age. The best part is that most classes are very affordable and offer flexible schedules," said Crocker.

Americans are still searching for the fabled "Fountain of Youth" and until someone finds it, we must try to do what we can to age well. Physical, mental, and emotional health are all interrelated and must be considered when discussing successful aging. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has many resources available to help you in your pursuit of a long, healthy life at <http://aging.tamu.edu>. For more information regarding successful aging, visit the National Institute on Aging Age Pages at <http://www.niapublications.org>.

Additionally, President Obama released a proclamation for Older Americans Month that you can access at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/04/30/presidential-proclamation-older-americans-month-2015>.

## Cell Phone Cleaning

You use your cell phone every day. It goes from your pocket or purse to your face. You hand it to your kid to play a game, take it into the bathroom with you and leave it by your bed at night. And everywhere your phone goes, germs follow. In fact, in a recent study, 82% of cell phones tested had bacteria contamination and 16% (that's 1 in 6) had E. coli (fecal in origin). Ewww!

Fortunately, you can reduce the number of germs on your cell phone. The American Cleaning Institute offers these simple tips for keeping your phone clean:

- Before you begin, check the owner's manual for any cleaning instructions specific to your device.
- Dirt, oil or germs from hands can mark up cell phones. Wipe the screen at least daily with a microfiber cloth.
- The fancy case you added to your phone can trap dirt and grime along the edges. Take the cover off weekly. Use a disinfecting wipe on the case, both inside and out. Let it dry completely before putting the case back on.
- Keep the keys from sticking (pun intended) and extend the life of your electronics by keeping your cell phones away from food and drinks.
- Wash your hands before using your phone to wash away germs and minimize the grime.

Source:

[http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/clean\\_living/cell\\_phone\\_cleaning.aspx](http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/clean_living/cell_phone_cleaning.aspx)

## World Environment Day is June 5

It is the biggest, most globally celebrated day for positive environmental action and you can do your part! It is easy to be environmentally savvy when you buy, use, and dispose of household cleaning products. ACI offers tips to make sure you are making the right choices each step of the way.

### What Can You Do?

A step-by-step guide to buying, using and disposing of household cleaning products - the environmentally smart way.



It's all about choices... and doing what's best for the environment -- a goal that's important for all of us! One area where each of us can make a positive contribution is in the way we purchase, use and dispose of cleaning products. And it all boils down to one simple

question...

*"How can I do the right thing in my own home, every day?"*  
The following steps are designed to help you make the best decisions about cleaning products for your family, your community and the environment.

### 1. Before you buy...

- Think about the cleaning job at hand.
- Read product labels carefully.
- Choose the product that is best for your job.
- Buy only what you can use.



### 2. Before you use...

- Read the label and follow directions for proper use.
- Follow all safety precautions.
- Use the recommended amount. More is not necessarily better!



### 3. After you use...

- Read the label and follow directions for proper storage.
- Keep lid tightly closed. If there is a child resistant closure, use it!
- Keep product in original container with readable labels.
- Share any product you can't use with a friend or neighbor.



### 4. If you must dispose of a product...

Follow label directions if provided. If there are no directions:

- Think about how you use the product. If it mixes with water it's water-soluble. Most liquid, gel and powder water-soluble household cleaning products can be disposed of down the drain with running water - just like when you use them.
- Most solid products (soap scouring pads, sticks, towelettes, etc.) can be placed in the trash. For other products (such as oven cleaners, crystal drain openers and furniture polishes) call the manufacturer's toll-free number (or write to them) for disposal recommendations, or check with your local waste disposal facility.



### 5. When you dispose of the containers...

- Empty any unused product (see #4).
- Check with your Community Recycling Center to see what type of plastic, paperboard and metal containers they accept.
- Refer to local guidelines for recycling plastics, paperboard and aerosol cans (steel and/or aluminum).



See more at

[http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/sustainability/what\\_can\\_i\\_do.aspx](http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/sustainability/what_can_i_do.aspx)

## Food Preservation Facts & Fiction

This year my friend Connie Moyers, Portales, NM County Extension Agent had the privilege of judging Food Preservation in another county. It was an eye opener, because they had to show how they processed the recipe and how long they processed it. Some of these canners did not adjust time or pressure for altitude. Many were first time canners. Some had taken their information from the Internet, and some used recipes passed down for generations. There was everything from water bathed corn (5 minutes), an Internet recipe to Sunshine Pickles, “left in sunshine for 10 days, brought in at night”, Aunt Susie’s recipe. DANGEROUS! Have you seen the Internet quote?

*“Everything you read on the Internet is True.”*  
Abraham Lincoln

Obviously, not everything on the internet is true!

We always have some interesting discussions with clientele about their food preservation methods. Just because we “Have always done it this way” or “No one has ever been come ill or died” does not mean it is a safe method. Sometimes we are just lucky and people used to die and no one knew why. Following are some comments from the National Center of Home Food Preservation, a research based source from the Internet and University of Georgia, following USDA guidelines.

- **If my recipe does not call for processing, do I need to do so?** Many recipes passed down through the years or found in older cookbooks do not include instructions for processing. The foods are usually canned by the open kettle method, sealed and stored. Foods prepared in this manner present a serious health risk-particularly low acid foods. To minimize the risk of food spoilage, all high acid foods should be processed in a water bath canner or pressure canner and all low acid foods in a pressure canner.
  - **Why is Open Kettle Canning not recommended?** In open kettle canning, food is cooked in an ordinary kettle, then packed into hot jars and sealed without processing. The temperatures obtained in open kettle canning are not high enough to destroy all spoilage and food poisoning organisms that may be in the food. Also, microorganisms can enter the food when it is transferred from the kettle to jar and cause spoilage.
  - **Why is canning summer squash or zucchini not recommended?** Recommendations for canning summer squashes, including zucchini, that appeared in former editions of So Easy to Preserve or USDA bulletins have been withdrawn due to uncertainty about the determination of processing times. Squashes are low-
- acid vegetables and require pressure canning for a known period of time that will destroy the bacteria that can cause botulism. Documentation for the previous processing times cannot be found and reports that are available do not support the old process. Slices or cubes of cooked summer squash will get quite soft and pack tightly into jars. The amount of squash filled into a jar will affect the heating pattern in that jar. It is best to freeze summer squashes or pickle them for canning, but they may also be dried.
- **Can I use my own salsa recipe?** Salsas are usually mixtures of acid and low-acid ingredients; they are an example of an acidified food. The specific recipe, and sometimes preparation method, will determine if a salsa can be process in a boiling water canner or a pressure canner. A process must be scientifically determined for each recipe. To can salsa at home, use only approved recipes from USDA, Cooperative Extension, Natural Center for Home Food Preservation or the current Ball book.
  - **How do I can oil with herbs?** Can I can pesto? **NO!** Herbs and oils are both low-acid and together could support the growth of Clostridium Botulinum bacteria. Oils may be flavored with herbs if they are made up for fresh use, stored in the refrigerator and used within 2 to 3 days. There are no canning recommendations. Fresh herbs must be washed well and dried completely before storing in the oil. The very best sanitation and personal hygiene practices must be used. Pesto is an uncooked seasoning mixture of herbs, usually including fresh basil and some oil. It may be frozen for long term storage; there are no home canning recommendations.
  - **Is it necessary to sterilize jars before canning?** Jars do not need to be sterilized before canning if they will be filled with food and processed in a boiling water bath canner for 10 minutes or more or if they will be processed in a pressure canner. Jars that will be processed in a boiling water bath canner for less than 10 minutes, once filled, need to be sterilized first by boiling them in hot water for 10 minutes before they are filled.
  - **Is it safe to process food in the oven?** **No!** This can be dangerous because the temperature will vary according to the accuracy of oven regulators and circulation of heat. Dry heat is very slow in penetrating into jars of food. Also, jars explode easily in the oven.
  - **Is it necessary to exhaust a pressure canner?** Yes, it is very important to allow steam to escape for 10 minutes before closing the valve, or placing the weight

on the vent. If the canner is not exhausted, the inside temperature may not correspond to the pressure on the gauge.

- **Do I really need to leave a certain amount of headspace in the jars?** Yes, leaving the specified amount of headspace in a jar is important to assure a vacuum seal. If too little headspace is allowed the food may expand and bubble out when air is being forced out from under the lid during processing. The bubbling food may leave a deposit on the rim of the jar or the seal of the lid and prevent the jar from sealing properly. If too much headspace is allowed, the food at the top is likely to discolor. Also, the jar may not seal properly because there will not be enough processing time to drive all the air out of the jar.
- **Just because a jar sealed is it safe?** A jar will seal as it cools when hot food or liquid is in the jar. This does not mean that it is safe. All air has not been exhausted and the proper internal temperature for an extended period of time may not have been reached in order to kill all bacteria.
- **What do I need to know about pickles?** Caution: The level of acidity in a pickled product is as important to its safety as it is to taste and texture. Do not alter vinegar, food or water proportions in a recipe or use a vinegar with unknown acidity. Use only recipes with tested proportions of ingredients. There must be a minimum, uniform level of acid throughout the mixed product to prevent the growth of botulinum bacteria. Pickled products are subject to spoilage from microorganisms, particularly yeasts and molds, as well as enzymes that may affect flavor, color and texture. Processing the pickles in a boiling-water canner will prevent both of these problems. Standard canning jars and self sealing lids are recommended. Processing times and procedures will vary according to food acidity and the size of food pieces.
- **What about jams and jellies?** Even though sugar helps preserve jellies and jams, molds can grow on the surface of these products. Research now indicates that the mold which people usually scrape off the surface of jellies may not be as harmless as it seems. Mycotoxins have been found in some jars of jelly having surface mold growth. Mycotoxins are known to cause cancer in animals; their effects on humans are still being researched. Because of possible mold contamination, paraffin or wax seals are no longer recommended for any sweet spread, including jellies. To prevent growth of molds and loss of good flavor or color, fill sterile Mason jars with hot product, leaving 1/4-inch headspace, seal with self sealing lids and process 5 minutes in a boiling-water canner. Correct process time

at higher elevations by adding 1 additional minute per 1,000 ft. above sea level. If unsterile jars are used, the filled jars should be processed 10 minutes and additional time for altitude. Use of sterile jars is preferred, especially when fruits are low in pectin, since the added 5 minute process time may cause weak gels. Turning jars upside down after filling is no longer an approved method for sealing jars.

### Where do I find approved recipes?

USDA "Complete Guide to Home Canning" (2009 National Center for Home Food Preservation website <http://ncf.uga.edu> Cooperative Extension Service <http://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs> Ball Blue Book (2010 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition) So Easy to Preserve, University of Georgia 5<sup>th</sup> Edition

Source: Extension Home Economics Newsletter by Connie Moyers, CEA in Portales, NM, September 2014.

### It's Picnic Season!

Should I clean or disinfect my summer serving trays and utensils?

It is important to know the difference between cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing. Here is the scoop:

- **CLEANING** works by using soap or detergents, water and friction to physically remove germs, dirt and impurities from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection by removing them. Hot water (120° - 140° F/50° - 60° C) also helps to reduce the level of dirt and germs.
- **SANITIZING** reduces, but does not necessarily eliminate, microorganisms in the air, on surfaces or on inanimate objects. Look for a product whose label is registered as a "sanitizer" under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA; 7 U.S.C. section 136 et seq.)
- **DISINFECTING** destroys or irreversibly inactivates infectious or other undesirable bacteria, pathogenic fungi, or viruses on surfaces or inanimate objects. These products are labeled (and registered with the EPA) as a "disinfectant" under the Act. Under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. section 136, et seq.).

Depending on where you stored your summer picnic gear, i.e., in a basement corner where mice or insects may reside, you may choose to sanitize or disinfect them before the

first use this spring. And remember: when grilling this season, be sure to avoid cross-contamination by never using the platter that contained raw meat, fish or poultry to hold cooked foods unless you wash it thoroughly in hot, soapy water first!

### FAQs About Cleaning and Disinfecting Household Surfaces

- Q. What is the difference between a disinfectant and a disinfectant cleaner or antibacterial cleaner?
- A. Disinfectants contain antimicrobial ingredients that kill germs if surfaces are free from heavy soil. Disinfectant or antibacterial cleaners contain ingredients for removing soil, as well as antimicrobial ingredients that kill germs. Household bleach disinfects when used according to label directions.
- Q. What antimicrobial ingredients are used in household cleaning products that kill germs?
- A. Common antimicrobial ingredients include pine oil, quaternary ammonium compounds, sodium hypochlorite, phenols and ethanol.
- Q. What microorganisms do disinfectants or antibacterial cleaners kill on household surfaces:?
- A. Depending on the active ingredient(s) and the product formulation, they kill bacteria such as Salmonella and E. coli, which cause intestinal illness, and Staphylococcus which causes skin infections; fungus that causes athlete's foot; and viruses such as Herpes simplex, Rhinovirus, which is the leading cause of the common cold; and Rotavirus, the major cause of diarrhea in young children. Read the label to find out specifically which germs the product is intended to kill.
- Q. How can I tell if a household cleaning product kills germs?
- A. Look for the words "disinfect," "disinfectant," "antibacterial" or "sanitize" on the label, as well as an EPA registration number, as this ensures that the product has met EPA requirements for killing germs.

Source:

[http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/clean\\_living/faqs\\_about\\_cleaning\\_disinfecting.aspx](http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/clean_living/faqs_about_cleaning_disinfecting.aspx)

### Recipe Corner



Take advantage of the fresh summer produce that will soon be in grocery stores and farmer's markets. If you have never tried grilling vegetables, this is an easy recipe. You can omit the butter and seasonings and use fat free zesty Italian dressing.

### Fresh Vegetable Kabobs

- 1/3 cup butter or margarine, melted
- 1-1/2 tablespoons fresh cilantro or parsley, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- Dash of salt
- 2 small ears of corn
- 1 small sweet red pepper
- 1 small sweet yellow pepper

Combine the first 6 ingredients; set aside. Cut corn into 1-inch thick rounds, and pepper into 1 1/2-inch squares; alternate on skewers. Brush with butter mixture. Grill over medium coals, basting occasionally, 10 to 15 minutes. Serve with remaining butter mixture. Makes 2 servings.

NOTE: Polish sausage chunks can be skewered along with the vegetables. this recipe can be broiled also. Experiment with other vegetables.

Source: Southwestern Public Service Electric Company "Thirty Years of Festive Foods."

Sincerely,

E. Kay Davis, M.S., L.D.

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