



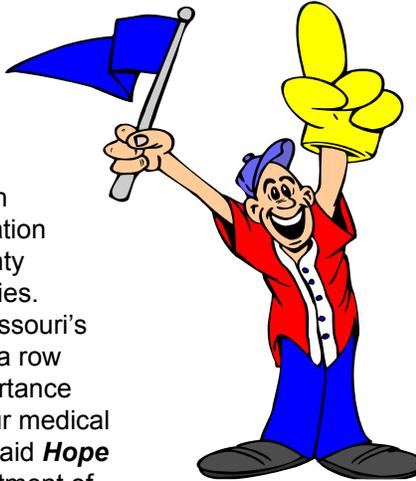
## Study Ranks St. Charles as Missouri's Healthiest County

A national study released last month ranked St. Charles County first in Missouri for its "Health Outcomes" and "Health Factors" categories. This marks the fourth consecutive year that the [County Health Rankings](#), compiled by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin's Population Health Institute, placed St. Charles County atop its list of Missouri's healthiest counties.

"Earning this distinction as one of Missouri's healthiest counties for the fourth year in a row is a tremendous recognition for the importance that St. Charles County residents and our medical community place on healthy lifestyles," said **Hope Woodson**, interim director for the Department of Community Health and the Environment.

Coupled with the overall healthy lifestyle of area residents, initiatives begun by the department have enhanced the well-being of our community. Staff actively networks with medical professionals and care providers to monitor disease threats, reduce incidences of chronic disease and assess the health needs of residents. An example of this outreach is the nearly 1,000 nutrition and fitness, alcohol abuse prevention, parenting and child care, tobacco cessation and other [educational programs](#) presented last year by staff to day care centers, schools, businesses and senior centers. Other impactful programs include [free immunizations for children](#) through the Vaccines For Children program (VFC), low-cost vaccinations for uninsured or under-insured children and adults participating in the Children's Immunization Program (ChIP) or the Adult Immunization Program (AIP), and low-cost treatment and prevention services through the STD Clinic. Additionally, the County's [Women, Infants and Children program \(WIC\)](#) counsels pregnant women and mothers with infants or young children on proper nutrition and provides supplemental, nutritious foods to developing families.

The rankings are based on recent public data collected from vital statistics and government health surveys. Health Outcomes are a representation of the health of a community, with rankings determined by how long people live (mortality) and how healthy people feel (morbidity). Health Factors are what influences the overall health of the



community, and these rankings are based on the community's health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic conditions, and physical environment.

Along with the continued population growth shown by the recent Census updates and improved economic conditions, these rankings further the notion that St. Charles County is an excellent location to raise a family or start a business. With a premature death rate that is both below the Missouri and National benchmarks, the study ranks St. Charles County second in Missouri in Mortality and 12th in Morbidity to top the state's Health Outcomes list. Topping the state in social/economic factors, ranking fourth in clinical care and placing fifth in healthy behaviors also led to the county's first-place ranking in the Health Factors category.

### PUBLIC HEALTH CALENDAR

Our staff and regional partners host educational programs and informational meetings to help members of the community live healthier lives. Here's a sample of events offered this month:

- April 20 - **Weekend Childbirth Preparation Class** (a one-day session to prepare for the birth of your baby) - SSM St. Joseph Health Center - 8:30 a.m. - Cost is \$80 per couple. Call (314) SSM-DOCS to register.
- April 20 - **Psychological First Aid Training** (learn methods for reducing mental distress during and after traumatic events) - Health Department Conference Room - 8:30 a.m. - Free - Call Hollie at (636) 949.7400 to register.
- May 7 - **Faith-Based Emergency Planning Workshop** (faith leaders can discover ways to help members and their organization plan for disasters) - Quail Ridge Lodge - 9 a.m. - Free - Please click the link above to register.

View our [Activities Calendar](#) for a complete list of upcoming Department of Community Health and the Environment programs.



# Safely Dispose of Spring Cleaning Waste

Home cleaning chores can unveil many items that can negatively impact our community, if not handled safely. The Division of Environmental Health and Protection offers a solution for the proper disposal of these toxic materials in a safe and convenient manner.

From April 23 through Oct. 26 this year, residents may safely dispose of hazardous household waste that typically is not collected by curbside recycling programs. Residents may bring unwanted items like chemicals, automobile fluids, pesticides and oil-based paints (latex paints are not accepted) to the [Recycle Works Central](#) location (60 Triad South Dr. in St. Charles) from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesdays through Fridays, and the last Saturday of each month, with no appointment necessary. There is a nominal \$10 fee for loads up to 50 pounds, with additional fees for larger sized collections. For a list of the materials accepted at the facility, please call (636) 949-1800 or visit our above website link. This service is open to St. Charles County residents, and proof of residency may be required.

To further the Reduce, Re-Use, Recycle mantra, the County's [Re-Use Mercantile](#) shops are open on the third Wednesday of each month and the Saturday that follows from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., at both Recycle Works Central and Recycle Works West. Sale items are comprised from those collected throughout the year, including electronics, appliances, sporting goods and government surplus. Please visit our [Activities Calendar](#) for a sampling of items available at our next sale.

## To ensure safety, please follow these precautions in bringing hazardous waste to Recycle Works Central:

- 1) Make certain that the waste is properly packed and does not mix with other materials.
- 2) Wherever possible, leave materials in their original containers. Items not in their original packaging should be clearly labeled with their contents. Mixed waste in plastic bags are not accepted.
- 3) Be sure the lid is securely attached.
- 4) Place the material inside a box that is lined with newspaper (filling gaps with additional crumpled newspaper will help prevent spills during transport to the facility).
- 5) Place the filled box in the trunk of your vehicle while transporting to Recycle Works Central.
- 6) Upon arrival at the facility, please remain in your vehicle until assisted.

## HEALTHY RECIPES

Each month, we take a traditional recipe and offer a healthier alternative. This time, we present a fresh salad to accompany your next cookout or picnic.

### Fresh Snow Pea and Tri-Colored Pepper Salad

*Recipe makes six servings. One serving contains 55 calories, three grams of fat, zero mg of cholesterol, 49 mg of sodium, eight grams of carbohydrates and two grams of protein.*

#### Salad Ingredients

- 2 quarts water
- 1 each, small green, red and yellow peppers (cored and sliced thin)
- 1/4 pound fresh snow peas, trimmed
- 1/2 cup halved cherry tomatoes

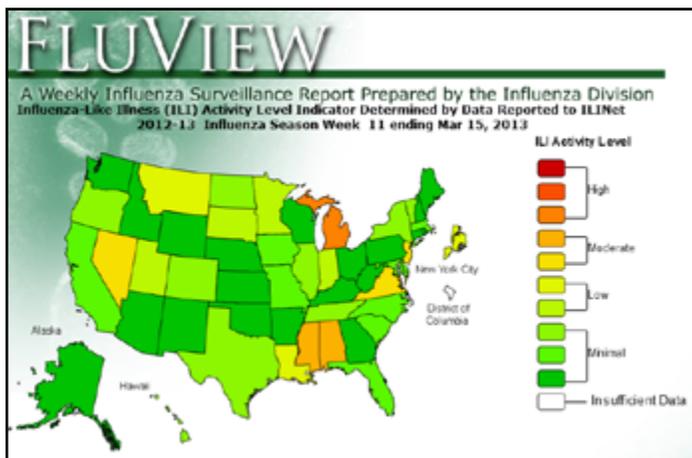
#### Dressing Ingredients

- 3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp minced shallot
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- Fresh ground pepper and salt to taste

#### Steps:

1. In a large pot, bring water to boil.
2. Add sliced peppers and blanch for two minutes. Add snow peas and blanch for additional 30 seconds. Plunge peppers and snow peas into ice water bath to stop cooking. Drain vegetables thoroughly.
3. In a large salad bowl, toss the peppers and snow peas with the tomatoes.
4. Combine dressing ingredients in a small bowl. Taste and add pepper/salt, as needed.
5. Drizzle dressing over vegetables and toss well.
6. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

(Recipe courtesy of *Diabetic Meals in 30 Minutes — or Less!* by Robyn Webb)



### Helpful Phone Numbers

Division of Public Health (636) 949-7400	WIC (636) 949-7402
Immunizations (636) 949-1857	Recycle Works Central (636) 949-1800
Vital Records (636) 949-7558	Recycle Works West (636) 949-1800
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

# Emergency Alerts May Ring Your Phone

Emergency officials across the nation have begun implementing the Commercial Mobile Alert System as a means for issuing Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs).

These messages will come across on newer-model cell phones in a format that appears much like a text. However, unlike texts, these warnings will be issued to all phones within range of a designated cell tower, as opposed to being directed only at a specific number.

Issued by your cell phone provider, these free alerts will tell the type of warning (weather threats, AMBER alerts, or Presidential-issued national emergencies), the affected area, and the duration. They are simple in nature and are intended to direct recipients to other sources for more detailed information.



The system sends a message to all devices in a given area. Because cell towers broadcast in a circle, you may end up receiving alerts for areas adjacent to your vicinity or receiving multiple alerts for the same incident. For example, if a tornado warning is issued, it would go to all towers serving that county - regardless of their exact location.

The alert messages are designed to have a unique ringtone and vibration, to differentiate from everyday use. These alerts will not interrupt calls or downloads but will be sent at the conclusion of the current use.

To learn more about the WEA program, please consult with your wireless service provider.

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Facebook! Become a fan:  
[www.facebook.com/StCharlesCountyMo](http://www.facebook.com/StCharlesCountyMo)

## LET'S TALK...

Are you interested in learning how community health impacts your life, your business and your community? Invite a member of our staff to speak with your organization about public health topics and education, emergency preparedness and other opportunities. Programs typically last about one hour but can be tailored to your organization's needs. For availability and topics offered, please call (636) 949-7408.

## 10 Questions To Ask Your Vet When Prescribed Medications

- 1. Why has my pet been prescribed this medication, and how long do I need to give it?** Your vet should tell you what the medication is expected to do for your pet and how many days to give it.
- 2. How do I give the medication to my pet, and should it be taken with food?** Your pet may have fewer side effects, like an upset stomach, from some medications taken with food - while other drugs are more effective on an empty stomach.
- 3. How often should the medication be given, and how much should I give each time?** Giving the right dose at the right time of day will help your pet get better more quickly.
- 4. How do I store the medication?** Some medications should be stored in a cool, dry place. Others may require refrigeration.
- 5. What should I do if my pet vomits or spits out the medication?** Your veterinarian may want to hear from you if your pet vomits, in order to switch to another drug, if needed.
- 6. What if I accidentally give too much?** Giving your pet too much of certain medications can cause serious side effects. You'll want to know if giving too much is a cause for concern that may require a trip to the animal emergency room.
- 7. Should I finish giving all of the medication, even if my pet seems to be back to normal?** Some medications, such as antibiotics, should be given for a certain length of time, even if your pet is feeling better.
- 8. Could this medication interact with other medications my pet is taking?** Always tell your veterinarian what other medications your pet takes, including prescriptions, over-the-counter medicines, and other dietary supplements.
- 9. What should I do if I see any side effects?** Your veterinarian can tell you if a reaction is normal or if it signals a serious problem. You may be asked to call your vet immediately if certain side effects occur.
- 10. Should I bring my pet back for a recheck?** Your vet may want to examine your pet or perform laboratory tests to make sure the medication is working as it should.

Information contributed by the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](http://www.fda.gov)

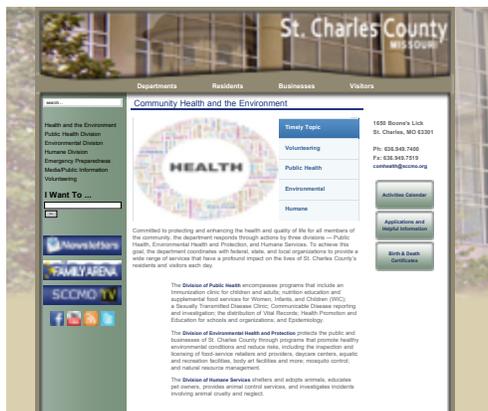
# Department's Upgraded Website Enhances Service

The Department of Community Health and the Environment's website ranks as one of the most visited local public health agency websites in Missouri. To make the widely visited website even more convenient and easy-to-navigate, this month we've launched an upgraded version at <http://health.sccmo.org/health>.

"The goal for this website is to provide information that allows users to easily discover the services we provide and to become healthier members of the community," Interim Director **Hope Woodson** said. "Being structured with other St. Charles County government agencies gives public health an even greater opportunity to serve as an educational resource for residents, medical professionals and others."

On the new "home" pages for the department and its three divisions, users can locate information in three different ways — through a "Table of Contents"-style navigation on the left, a rotating photo display and on-screen links. In addition, columns and buttons at the bottom of each home page and along the right side of every page within the site will direct users to additional information from the health department and its partners.

The website is categorized by the department's divisions and programs. The [Division of Public Health](#) section describes services offered through the



Immunization, WIC and STD clinics; provides an opportunity to obtain Missouri birth and death certificates; illustrates programs presented by the Health Education staff; and offers links to many online resources. In the [Division of Environmental Health and Protection](#) sections, users will find food service and solid-waste inspection report scores, information on recycling and the Re-Use Mercantile shops, mosquito control program activities, and the ability to download a variety of permit applications. Visitors to the [Division](#)

[of Humane Services](#) pages can view pictures and videos of animals available through the Pet Adoption Center, learn about pet care services and discover volunteer opportunities.

In addition to content from the department, the website provides information on emergency preparedness, natural disasters and potential public health threats through [the Bioterrorism program's partnership with the Division of Emergency Management](#). With measures detailed for both individuals and organizations, users can find information to protect them before, during and after an event. Historic information and further resources on earthquakes, floods and tornadoes within and around St. Charles County are also available.

## Protect Yourself, Others by Raising Awareness

Each April, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) observes STD Awareness Month to recognize the impact that sexually transmitted diseases have on our nation.

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are caused by infections passed from one person to another through sexual contact and can be passed through oral, vaginal or anal sex. The CDC estimates that 20 million new STD infections occur each year in the United States — almost half of them among young people 15-24 years of age.

STDs are the most commonly reported infectious diseases in the United States, with chlamydia and gonorrhea as the most common STDs. Caused by the bacteria, *Chlamydia trachomatis*, chlamydia is nicknamed a "silent" disease because about three quarters of infected women and about half of infected men show no symptoms. If untreated, chlamydial infections can progress to serious reproductive and other health problems with

both short-term and long-term consequences. Chlamydia can be easily treated and cured with antibiotics. Gonorrhea is caused by *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, a bacteria that can grow and multiply easily in the warm, moist areas of the reproductive tract, mouth, throat, eyes and anus. Several antibiotics can successfully cure gonorrhea in adolescents and adults. However, drug-resistant strains of gonorrhea are increasing in many areas of the world and successful treatment is becoming more difficult.

The St. Charles County [STD Clinic](#) provides testing, treatment and prevention education for sexually transmitted diseases. Located within the Division of Public Health at 1650 Boone's Lick Road in St. Charles, the clinic provides most services for a \$10 per visit fee (a culture test for genital herpes (HSV) is an additional \$40). Appointments are required for your visit and may be scheduled Monday - Friday by calling (636) 949-7401.

