



Distractions Drive **Danger**

The average American spends more than 70 minutes each day inside their car. With our busy lives often centering on career, school and family, vehicles have become mobile offices, social spots and networking hubs.

Distractions in our vehicles are numerous, which can lead to many perils.

Distracted driving can include such activities as talking on the phone, eating, putting on makeup, talking, changing the radio and texting. Statistics show us that 80 percent of crashes involve some form of distracted driving. To further emphasize the importance of paying attention while at the wheel of a car, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently reported that distracted driving kills more than 15 people and causes more than 1,200 vehicle-related injuries each day in the United States.

Texting is especially dangerous because it takes a driver's attention away from driving more frequently and for longer periods than other distractions. Texting drivers spend up to 400 percent more time with their eyes off the road. In addition to having their eyes off of the road, texting often involves holding the phone with both hands, which means that a driver's hands are not on the wheel and the driver is less focused on the task of driving. To learn more about the hazards of texting while driving, view this video titled, "[THE LAST TEXT](#)."

Distracted driving is certainly not our only challenge in Missouri. Although since 2005, overall traffic deaths have decreased by more than 37 percent, Missouri certainly has hard work ahead terms of seat belt safety. According to Arrive Alive, seven out of 10 Missourians killed in traffic crashes in 2011 were unbuckled. The CDC cites that in the United States motor vehicle related injuries are the leading cause of death for 5-34 year olds.

What can be done to save lives? The Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety recently rolled out a goal to reduce fatalities to 700 or less by 2016 through a program

called "Blueprint to SAVE MORE LIVES." Missouri's Blueprint to SAVE MORE LIVES serves as a guide outlining the "Necessary Nine" strategies in the areas of enforcement, education, engineering and emergency medical services. In 2009, a law was passed in Missouri

making it illegal for drivers age 21 and younger to send text messages while driving. As a result, those caught texting while driving will be assessed a \$200 fine.



Help spread the word:

- Buckle up!
- Don't text while driving!
- Be aware of your surroundings!

For more information on the dangers of texting and driving, seat belt safety and the Blueprint to SAVE MORE LIVES visit www.SAVEMOLIVES.com.

HEALTH CALENDAR

Our staff offers educational programs and informational meetings to help members of the community live healthier lives. Here is just a sample of events occurring this month:

- Jan. 17 - "**How Lou Got the Flu**" - pre-school education - United Services West
- Jan. 17 - "**Basic Food Safety Training**" - Health Department Conference Room - 2 p.m. (Please complete and return the linked application to register.)
- Jan. 21 - "**Tobacco Education**" - Preferred Family Healthcare
- Jan. 25 - "**Handwashing**" - school education - Castlio Elementary
- Jan. 30 - "**Medical Reserve Corps volunteer orientation**" - Health Department Conference Room - 6 p.m. (Please call (636-949-7554 to register)

If you're interested in scheduling a program for your organization or attending one yourself, please call us at (636) 949-7400.



Women Fortified With Folic Acid See Fewer Birth Defects

Worldwide, more than 300,000 babies are born every year with neural tube defects (NTDs), which include spina bifida and anencephaly, a birth defect of the brain. Although NTDs are a significant cause of infant death and lifelong disability, many are preventable. To help prevent these diseases, the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) recommends that all women capable of becoming pregnant should consume 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid daily to help prevent NTDs. While the United States has seen a significant decline in NTD rates since the focus on women's folic acid intake began in 1998, NTD rates remain very high throughout the world.

The recommendation highlighted three ways that women can get folic acid: through diet, vitamin supplements and flour fortification. Experts agreed that getting 400 mcg of folic acid from naturally-occurring food sources alone was impractical — women would have to eat a lot of folate-rich foods, which are expensive and not readily available in many communities. Additionally, Gallup polls showed low intake of folic acid through supplementation among women of reproductive age, despite many efforts to promote the use of supplements. This information justified moving toward fortification of flour with folic acid and led to the January 1998 U.S. Food and



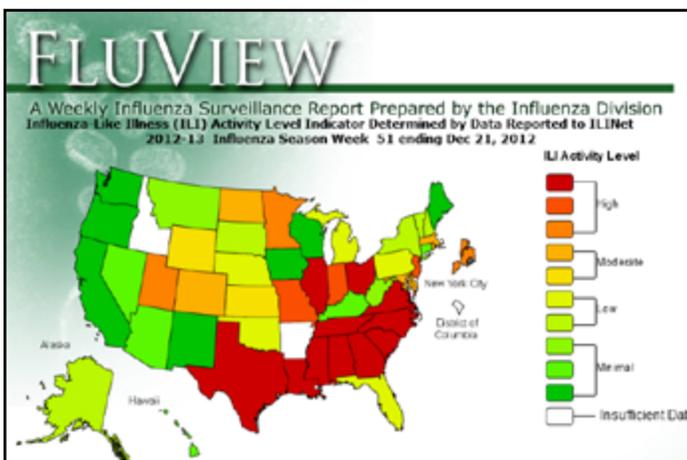
Drug Administration-mandated fortification of cereal grain products labeled as enriched in the United States.

“At that point, we had what we thought was the best possible coverage of women of child-bearing age to get folic acid for the prevention of NTDs,” says former CDC scientist Joe Mulinare, MD, MSPH. With a 36 percent reduction in the rates of NTDs by the end of 2006, folic acid fortification was recently named one of the Ten Great Public Health Achievements in the United States.

Building on the success of folic acid fortification in the United States, CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities has a global initiative to expand the reach of folic acid fortification in low- and middle-resource countries and strengthen neural tube defects surveillance systems. The initiative aims to increase folic acid intake among women of reproductive age. These efforts can lead to the prevention of 150,000-210,000 of the more than 300,000 neural tube defects that occur worldwide each year.

Please click [FOLIC ACID](#) for more information on the benefits of this vitamin on women and children's health.

(Information in this article was contributed by the CDC)



HEALTHY RECIPES

Each month, we take a traditional recipe and offer a healthy alternative. This time, we'll re-envision an Asian delight.

Sesame Noodles

Recipe makes six servings. One serving contains 261 calories, five grams of fat, 53 mg of cholesterol, 25 mg of sodium, 44 grams of carbohydrates and nine grams of protein.

Ingredients

- 2 tsp sesame oil
- 6 cups of fettuccine noodles (or other long noodle pasta)
- 1 10-oz package of frozen mixed vegetables
- 2 Tbsp toasted sesame seeds
- 1/4 cup sliced scallions

Steps:

1. In a large pot, boil water to cook pasta. Salt water for flavor and to avoid clumping.
2. Cook pasta until almost al dente.
3. During last three minutes of cooking pasta, add the frozen vegetable package and cook for three minutes.
4. Drain pasta and vegetables. Return to large pot.
5. Add sesame oil and sesame seeds. Mix gently with the pasta.
6. Serve in small bowl or plate and top with scallions.

(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

Give a Natural Gift After the Holiday

After the Yuletide celebration, give one more gift by recycling your natural Christmas tree so that it may be turned into mulch or fish habitat. Again this winter, St. Charles County is partnering with area municipalities to offer residents this free service at various sites.

Be sure to remove the tree stand, all decorations, and any plastic bags or covering before leaving your tree at one of the locations below:

St. Peters

- St. Peters Earth Centre, 115 Ecology Drive
Open 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., (Mon. thru Sat. only) until Jan. 19

Wentzville

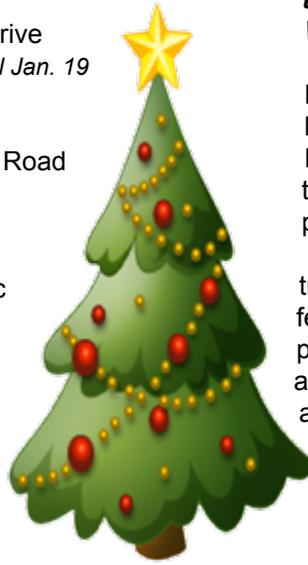
- Progress Park (parking lot), 968 Meyer Road
Open 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., until Jan. 18

O'Fallon

- Civic Park (upper parking lot), 400 Civic Park Drive
- O'Fallon Sports Park, 3589 Highway K
Locations open from dawn to dusk until Jan. 14

Lake Saint Louis

- Founders Park, 7 Freymuth Road
Open during daylight hours until Jan. 17



St. Charles County

- Quail Ridge Park (Group Picnic Area)
5501 Quail Ridge Parkway (Wentzville)
Open 7 a.m. to sunset until Jan. 22

To further assist the community this holiday season, the Recycle Works West and Recycle Works Central locations will accept non-foil gift boxes, wrapping paper and unwanted tree lights for recycling. **Please note that trees will not be accepted at the Recycle Works locations.**

Recycle Works Central is at 60 Triad South Drive in St. Peters, and Recycle Works West is located at 2110 E. Pitman Avenue in Wentzville. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday. For information or directions, please click [HERE](#).

Another great idea for your used Christmas tree is to place it in your backyard as a bird feeder and sanctuary. Fresh orange slices, strung popcorn or other treats will attract birds. Be sure all decorations, hooks, garland, and tinsel strands are removed.

For information about St. Charles County's recycling programs, please call us at 636-949-1800.

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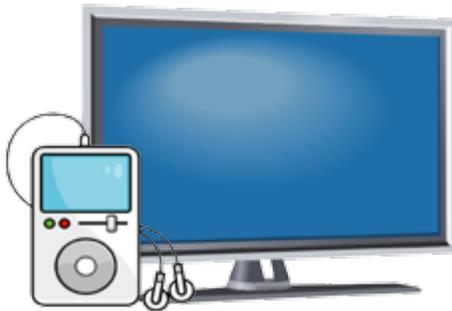
Recycle Holiday Electronics To Give Them RE-USE

If you're among the lucky families that received a new flat-screen television, gaming system, computer or appliance this holiday, you've probably already found the perfect place to display your new electronic device.

But, what did you do with the old unit? Each year, nearly 2 million tons of electronics are tossed in the trash as we make way for newer and improved resources.

In addition to overloading landfills, these devices often contain harmful materials like lead or mercury that can further pollute our environment.

You can safely and conveniently discard your old



devices by taking them to either of the county's [RECYCLE WORKS](#) locations in St. Peters or Wentzville. Open Monday through Saturday, these facilities recycle used electronics and parts for little to no cost, depending upon the item.

Recycling your electronic equipment enables its parts to be re-used by others. For example, the County's [RE-USE MERCANTILE](#) shops on the third Wednesday of each month and the Saturday that follows (open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.) give additional value to items that may otherwise end up in area landfills. Materials in these monthly sales are comprised from items collected throughout the year, including electronics, sports equipment and government surplus. Along with whole functioning equipment, you can also pick up parts and small devices to enhance existing material.

For more information about electronics recycling in St. Charles County and for the dates of the next Re-Use Mercantile sale, please call (636) 949-1800.

Protect Your Pet From *Winter's Chill*

As temperatures drop, and winter's chill sets in, staying warm and safe can become difficult. It's up to you to protect your pets from cold temperatures and potentially dangerous winter storms.

While it's always best to bring pets indoors in cold weather, if that is not possible, you must provide them with a safe shelter. Safe winter shelters are ones that are off the ground, protected from the wind and insulated against the cold. To help this insulation for outdoor family pets, the Pet Adoption Center offers straw that can be used for bedding (please note that this offer is not transferable to livestock).

Another important care note during the winter is to make sure your pet has food and water. In lower temperatures, animals will require additional feed (especially protein) because their bodies will work harder to stay warm. Fresh, drinkable water is also necessary, so be sure to check bowls regularly for freezing.



When walking your dog in the winter, be sure to keep him or her on a leash at all times. Dogs can get salt and other ice melt material on their coats or paws, which is potentially dangerous if swallowed. Sensitive paws can also be damaged by sharp ice crystals or objects hidden by snow cover.

Be aware that outside cats and wildlife sometimes seek shelter under the hood of cars, so bang loudly on the car hood to allow them to escape before starting your engine.

For more cold weather safety tips or to inquire about building a protective shelter, please call the Pet Adoption Center at (636) 949-PETS.



Need a Copy of a Birth or Death Certificate?

If you're seeking copies of your family's birth or death certificates, the health department's Vital Records program offers a convenient solution.

To obtain these records, an individual or family member must complete an application. Birth records can be obtained for any immediate family member born in Missouri since 1920. Death certificates are available for any family member's death that occurred in Missouri since 1980.

In-person applications are accepted from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., weekdays (excluding holidays), at the department's office (located at 1650 Boone's Lick Road in St. Charles). Copies of birth certificates are \$15 apiece, and death certificates are \$13 (\$10 for each additional death certificate copy ordered at the same time). The Department of Community Health and

the Environment accepts cash, money orders and checks (with proper identification) for payment.

As an added convenience, those who are unable to visit the department's offices may obtain their birth or death certificates online (at www.SCCEALTH.org) for an additional charge. These documents can be ordered at any time through the department's partnership with VitalChek Network, Inc. A convenience fee, which is dependent on the document requested and the speed of delivery, will be charged for these online orders. A major credit card is required for securing online orders.

For more information about this convenient service, please call the Vital Records desk at 636-949-7558.

