

# STRENGTHENING OKLAHOMA FAMILIES



## Gearing up for fall home energy management

**GARFIELD COUNTY EXTENSION**

Oklahoma residents know they'll be running the air conditioner and fans in their homes for several more weeks, but that doesn't mean fall energy management preparations should be put off.

Nearly half of the energy used in your home goes to heating and cooling, said Gina Peek, [Oklahoma State University Extension](#) housing and consumer specialist and interim associate dean.

"Making smart decisions regarding your home's heating and cooling system can have a big impact on utility bills. A few simple steps around the home can pay big dividends when the weather cools down," Peek said. "Think back to the deep freeze Oklahoma experienced in February this year and remember how your utility bills reflected the increased energy usage."

The easiest and least expensive way to increase system efficiency is to change the air filter regularly. Check it once per month and change it, at minimum, three times per year.

"A dirty filter slows down air flow and makes the system work harder to keep you warm or cool," said Scott Frazier, OSU Extension energy management specialist and associate professor in the [department of biosystems and agricultural engineering](#). "A clean filter also will prevent dust and



dirt from building up in the system, which could lead to a costly repair or an early system failure."

Just like people go to the doctor and get a yearly checkup or schedule their vehicle for a tune-up, it's important to do the same for your HVAC system. In the fall, check all gas or oil connections, gas pressure, burner combustion and heat exchanger. Improper connections can be a fire hazard and can contribute to health problems.

Frazier said a smart thermostat is a great investment for homeowners to help lower utility bills.

"A smart thermostat lets you control the home's heating and cooling temperature settings from a smart device such as a cell phone, tablet or computer," he said. "These thermostats are Wi-Fi enabled, which allows access to its temperature and other features through an app downloaded on your smart device."

Another option is a programmable thermostat that

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Garfield County OSU Extension

#### Address

316 E. Oxford  
Enid, OK 73701

#### Phone

580-237-1228

#### Email

Joy Rhodes  
[joy.rhodes@okstate.edu](mailto:joy.rhodes@okstate.edu)

#### Website

<http://oces.okstate.edu/garfield/>

#### Social Media

Facebook: Garfield County OSU Extension Family & Consumer Sciences

### In this issue: Gearing up for fall home energy management

#### Homeowners Fall Checklist

#### Active Parenting

#### MyPlate is the new Guide in Town

#### OHCE News & Notes

#### Dates to Remember

*(Continued from page 1)*

allows homeowners to set the temperature for different times of the day. For example, the heat can be set to automatically turn down to a specified temperature when everyone goes to bed and automatically turn up in the morning.

Another area to check on is the ductwork in the home. The ducts that move the air often can be big energy wasters. Sealing and insulating ducts can significantly improve the efficiency of your air system. Start with the ductwork that runs through

unheated/uncooled parts of the home such as the attic, crawl spaces and garage, then move to heated/cooled spaces in the home.

If your heat and air system is older, or simply isn't heating and cooling effectively, have it evaluated by a professional, Peek said.



# HOMESOWNER *Fall* CHECKLIST

## Interior:

- Change air filters for maximum energy savings.
- Test all smoke and CO detectors.
- Check your water filters.
- Clean filter on the fan over the range or clean the hood above.
- Check dryer vents for tears. Vacuum/brush out lint in dryer hose and around lint screen.
- Pull refrigerator away from wall and vacuum the condenser coils and remove all build up and debris.
- Schedule Fall furnace inspections.
- Clean ceiling fans-turn the switch to circulate air in the opposite direction.
- Check showers for cracked tiles or around sinks. *Loose tiles around water could lead to rotting behind them.*
- Unscrew the shower head and look for collected sediment. *Can be affecting water pressure.*

## Exterior:

- Check for cracks in concrete or asphalt on your driveway, sidewalks, or concrete slabs. *These can be a tripping hazard and can invite water which will continue to cause more damage in the winter months.*
- Examine porches and decks for loose rails, boards and damaged steps. Replace if necessary.
- Check gutters and downspouts for debris or improper pitch. *Clogged gutters or water build up during storms can lead to damage to the roof.*
- Examine weather stripping around exterior doors and windows. Replace if necessary.

## Lawn/Garden:

- Aerate the lawn
- Fertilize the lawn with a high-phosphorus fertilizer.
- Trim dead trees/plant limbs/perennials.
- Drain an store garden hoses. Turn off water to exterior spigots before temperatures reach freezing, or install insulation covers on spigots.





For parents and other caregivers where the following topics will be addressed:

- ⇒ Being an Active Parent
- ⇒ Cooperation & Communication
- ⇒ Responsibility & Discipline
- ⇒ Building Courage & Self Esteem
- ⇒ Understanding & Redirecting Misbehavior
- ⇒ Active Parenting for School Success

**2021 Class Session**

**October 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th - 5:30 p.m.**  
at the Garfield County OSU Extension Center  
316 E. Oxford, Enid OK 73701

**Participants must attend all four classes in a session to complete the program.**

**Classes will consist of group discussions, video presentations, and hands-on activities.**

*Joy Rhodes, Garfield Co. Extension Educator, Family & Consumer Sciences/4-H Youth Development is the program facilitator.*

**Fee for the class is \$30.00 per participant per entire session.**

Please pre-register 3 business days prior to the session.  
(at least 4 people must be pre-registered for the classes to be held)

**If interested, complete and return the bottom portion of this flyer with the class fee to the Garfield County OSU Extension Office. If you have questions, please call (580) 237-1228.**

Oklahoma State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, State and Local Governments Cooperating. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, or status as a veteran and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Yes, I plan to attend the **Active Parenting** class!

Enclosed is my \$30.00 class fee, payable to "OSU Extension Center".

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Number & Ages of Children \_\_\_\_\_

**Return at least 3 business days prior to the session you plan to attend:**

**Garfield County OSU Extension Center  
316 E. Oxford  
Enid, OK 73701**



**GARFIELD COUNTY  
EXTENSION**

## MyPlate is The New Guide in Town

If you are like most of us, you grew up learning about the USDA's Food Pyramid. That has been replaced with MyPlate. You might be wondering - what is MyPlate? Instead of a pyramid of foods to eat during the day, MyPlate simplifies eating healthy; it provides a guide or map for what we should eat at each meal, taking out some of the guesswork. Picture a plate that is divided into four sections. Each section of the plate has its own food group. One quarter for fruit, one for vegetables, one for grains, and one for protein foods. Using MyPlate as a template for your meals makes it easier to eat healthy every day. You can find a wealth of information at [www.MyPlate.gov](http://www.MyPlate.gov). MyPlate even has an app for smartphones and tablets. Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables – Use frozen, canned, or fresh. Frozen fruits and vegetables last longer than fresh produce, making them a good buy when trying to stretch food dollars. Choose low sodium and no added sugar frozen options and look for key phrases like 'low sodium' or 'packed in juice' on the labels of canned goods. Look for what is in season when you buy fresh to get the most economical and freshest.

Make half your grains whole – Use brown rice, whole grain bread and pasta, oats, quinoa, barley, and more. Eating whole grain bread is the easiest way to make half of your grains whole. When you get breads, check the ingredients list by the nutrition label. It should say "100% Whole Grain" as the first ingredient. Whole grains have fiber, which make us feel full longer, and helps to lower the risk of type 2 diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and other chronic illnesses.

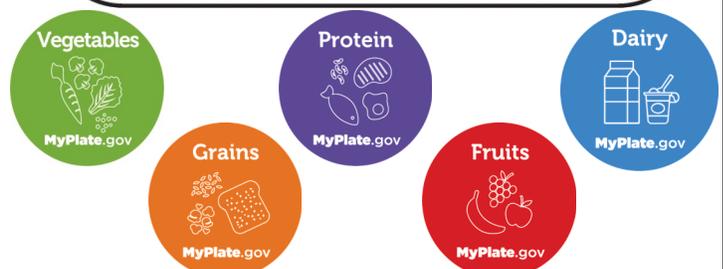
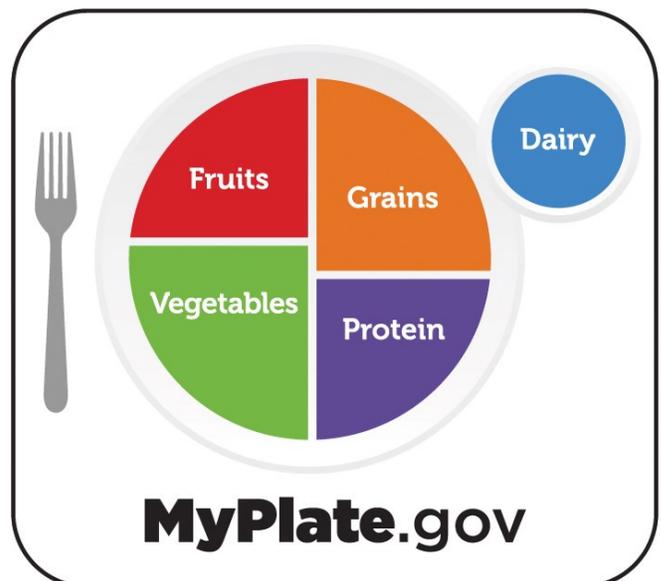
Vary your protein food choices - Use lean protein choices like 93% lean ground beef, pork loin, and chicken breasts with the skin removed. Pick seafood options that have the beneficial fatty acids and lower levels of mercury, such as salmon, trout, and anchovies. If you are vegetarian, this food group includes

protein from plants, such as: peas, beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, and soy products.

MyPlate provides a template for your meals so that you can make healthier, more informed choices. Next time someone asks you the age-old question of, "How many vegetable servings do I need in a day?", you will have the answer! Go to the [www.MyPlate.gov](http://www.MyPlate.gov) to learn more.

For the month of August try to use the MyPlate method of meal planning for at least one meal a day – try to imagine your plate is divided up and put in the right food groups. Add a serving of low-fat dairy or dairy alternative on the side to complete a healthy meal. Good Luck with some easy changes to your diet.

## Start simple with MyPlate



## OHCE News & Notes



### OHCE Board Meeting

The August OHCE Executive Board meeting will be held Monday, August 9, 9:30 am. We will be finalizing plans for the Garfield County Fair, sharing committee reports and starting the OHCE Quilt Raffle fundraiser.

- \* ***Be ready to volunteer to help at our County Fair September 8-11. We will need volunteers to watch exhibits as well as discuss plans for short demonstrations.***



### Exercise for Life

Starting August 9 and through September 3 we will meet every Monday, Wednesday and Friday starting at 8:30 am in the Garfield County OSU Conference Room. Classes work on building your balance, increasing your physical strength, increasing flexibility and improving your cardio strength. Cost is \$15 for the 4 week class.



### Garfield County Fair

All entries must be pre-entered by Wednesday September 1, 5:00 p.m.

#### ***Wednesday Sept. 8th—Entry Day***

- All entries in place except OHCE by 6:00 p.m.

#### ***Thursday, Sept. 9th at 9:00 a.m. - Judging starts***

- OHCE must be in place by 11:00 a.m.
- Judging OHCE entries—1:00 p.m.
- Chocolate Dessert Contest—6:00 p.m.

#### ***Friday— September 10th***

- Pie Contest 10:00 a.m.

#### ***Saturday— September 11th***

- Best of Wheat Contest 1:00 p.m.

#### ***Sunday— September 12th***

- Exhibits released 2-4 p.m.

***More details are available in the Fair Book***

***Copies of the Fair Book are available in the Garfield County OSU Extension Office***



### September Leader Lesson

OHCE lesson for your September lesson will be one of the State Lessons “Attracting Pollinators to your Garden” or “Promoting Diversity and Inclusion”. The lesson will be held Wednesday, August 25, 2 pm at the Garfield County OSU Conference Room.



**GARFIELD COUNTY  
EXTENSION**

This newsletter is published monthly by the Garfield County OSU Extension Center and is one way of communicating educational information. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement is implied.

**Joy Rhodes**  
Extension Educator, FCS/4-H Youth Dev.



Garfield County Cooperative Extension Service  
 Oklahoma State University  
 316 E. Oxford  
 Enid, OK 73701

**GARFIELD COUNTY  
 EXTENSION**

## Dates to Remember

- Aug. 1-3- OHCE State Meeting
- Aug. 9—Sept. 3—Exercise for Life 8:30 am, M-W-F
- Aug. 9—OHCE Board Mtg. 9:30 am
- Aug. 25—Leader Lesson 2 pm
- Sept. 1 = OHCE Fair Entries due at Fairgrounds by 5 pm
- Sept. 8-11—Garfield County Fair



**GARFIELD COUNTY  
 EXTENSION**

Be like a *sunflower*  
 bright, sunny,  
 and *positive*  
 spread seeds  
 of *happiness*  
 stand tall  
 & *always*  
 turn to the  
*light*

