



Caregiving During the Coronavirus Pandemic

Within the last several weeks, Oklahoma, along with the rest of the United States and the world, entered an unprecedented time. As COVID-19 continues to spread, public officials have implemented new policies regarding social spaces, increasing to shelter-in-place orders across the state.

Many families are left to figure out how to both work from home, as well as help continue their children’s educations. But for some families, it isn’t about trying to figure out ‘new’ math or brushing off their geography skills, but instead, how to best care for an aging relative.

Coronavirus disease 2019, also known as COVID-19, is a respiratory illness that can be transmitted by close contact with an infected person through droplets produced when they cough or sneeze. Another way the disease can be transmitted is coming in contact with a surface or object that has the droplets on it, then touching their mouth, nose or eyes. Some symptoms include fever, cough and shortness of breath. While some patients have reported mild cases, individuals with weakened immune systems, such as older adults or those with asthma, are at an increased risk for severe – even deadly – respiratory symptoms.

So, what can caregivers do to protect themselves and their loved ones? First and foremost, it is vital as the caregiver to keep yourself well. Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water. Caregivers also should avoid crowds. This has become a little easier as people are sheltering at home.

Other tips include coughing or sneezing into the bend of your elbow or a disposable tissue and cleaning frequently touched

surfaces in your home. This includes mobility and medical equipment.

Not only do caregivers need to keep themselves well, they also need to keep their loved one well, too.

To help reduce the risk of exposure, take your loved one to the emergency room only if they’re having difficulty breathing or a very high fever. Otherwise, your best bet is to call your healthcare provider. Check into telehealth options. Medicare has expanded the benefits for telehealth.

Help your loved one remember to wash their hands. Caregivers could even put written notes around the house with reminders. For those fortunate enough to have hand sanitizer in the home, keep it out in the open so it serves as a visual reminder to use it. Also, have an alternate plan in mind in the event that you as the primary caregiver becomes ill.

In these times, it’s important to remember that social distancing doesn’t isolation. Encourage your loved one to think beyond their circle of friends and reach out to neighbors or congregation members. Thankfully during this time, technology can help with social distancing while still feeling in touch. Show your loved one how to video chat with a loved one, or make the call yourself and hand off the phone.

While technology is a wonderful tool to use, going old-school can be just as much fun. Ask other family members and friends to write letters or cards to help lift your loved one’s spirits.

Above all, always ensure your loved one feels included. As we are all homebound during this unprecedented time, it may be a good idea to ask your loved one to complete a project. Be sure that the project is something that excites them and keeps them engaged, though it does not need to be a large project. This also is a great time to get your loved one to tell stories of their youth. Record short videos or audio tapes to capture these precious memories.

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Major County OSU Extension

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Be Cautious When Sheltering from Tornadoes During Pandemic

While the country is rightfully concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic, Oklahomans have another concern this time of year – tornado season.

For those who typically take cover in public storm shelters or generously invite neighbors to share their own, what is the proper protocol during a time of social distancing?

Unfortunately there are no definitive answers.

Members of every household should take time to customize and implement emergency management at home before it is needed. Have a home emergency plan, and prepare the home for likely threats Oklahoma faces every year, especially at the beginning of tornado season.

Right now, where you choose to shelter and with whom is an individual decision based on underlying health and the expected severity of the tornado risk. Therefore, the answer is going to be different for each individual during each storm occurrence.

However, my recommendation during this period of continued community spread of COVID-19 is to shelter for tornadoes at home, preferably in a storm shelter or basement. For those who live in manufactured housing or on an upper floor in an apartment building, you must seek shelter elsewhere.

For those without a shelter at home, it is recommend sheltering with a close neighbor who is open to the idea. If that is not possible, getting to the lowest level interior room or closet, staying close to the floor and taking cover under blankets and pillows. He also suggested wearing a bicycle helmet, long pants, long sleeves and sturdy shoes.

It is important for everyone to have an emergency preparedness kit that can be grabbed easily and taken to the shelter.

Obvious items to include are medications, a flashlight, extra batteries, a battery powered weather radio and some nonperishable foods. But in light of the pandemic we're in, you also should include masks, tissues, disposable gloves and hand sanitizer. It's also a good idea to include a plastic bag to dispose of used tissues.

Should anyone in the shelter cough or sneeze, the person should do so in a tissue or in the sleeve of the long-sleeved shirt they are wearing.

Oklahomans have learned to prepare for storm season and other emergencies, so the COVID-19 pandemic should not be that different.

Safety is the main ingredient in being prepared for a storm. With the situation we currently are in, you must take a few extra precautions.



Giving Overlooked Canned Foods New Life

Not all Oklahomans were able to get to grocery stores to stock up on favorite foods in preparation for home quarantines ahead of COVID-19. Budgets and opportunities likely feel even more constrained now with announced business closures.

It is possible consumers will have to get creative with what is still on their shelves or available from food pantries.

First, think about the foods and recipes you do like. Then, consider how you can incorporate these less-liked foods into new dishes with other ingredients you prefer. Finding a way to hide food in recipe is a great way to help ensure you make the most of what already is on the pantry shelf.

For example, many canned vegetables mix well into soups and stews. Those underappreciated flavors and textures easily blend in with the other ingredients. For those who are not a fan of fruit cocktail or other canned fruits, consider blending the ingredients into a smoothie along with a banana, fruit juice and ice.

Another way to disguise the flavor of a not-so-favorite food is to prepare it with other foods with strong flavors of their own. Foods can be sautéed with flavored oil and garlic, for example. Add some salsa or low-sodium soy sauce, lemon juice or ketchup to create a completely new dish.

If those tips are still unpalatable, consider smaller bites. When the food is cut into small pieces, it is easier to swallow more quickly. Caution is urged to not swallow too much at a time.

Or alternate between taking a bite of the less-desired food with a food that is more well liked. Be sure to have a beverage to help wash down the food.

Probably the best take-away from this experience is the next time you restock your emergency food supply, make sure you're adding not only healthy versions of foods with a long shelf life, but foods you actually enjoy. Emergency foods should bring people comfort and peace of mind, not more stress.



Major County OHCE *News and Notes*



High School Scholarships

Applications are due by April 15 for the Major County OHCE High School Scholarships. The applications will then be sent out of the county for judging.

OHCE Week

2020 OHCE Week is May 3 to 9. It looks like we won't be able to carry out our original plans for a fieldtrip during *this* week, but hopefully we can do that some other time. Stay posted! You can still take some time to share the value of OHCE with non members through social media and phone calls.

Lesson Leader Trainings

There will not be a Lesson Leader Training for April (for your May meetings) due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The lesson is "Herb Gardening" and it will be mailed to each member individually.

There will not be a Lesson Leader Training for May since June is a FREE month. Hopefully by then members can get together for a fun or family activity.

County Planning Meeting

The next County Planning Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 13 (date subject to change) beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the Exhibit Building at the Major County Fairgrounds. Items on the agenda will include rescheduling of the Promotional Event Fieldtrip, the State OHCE Meeting, cookies and fruit for 4-H Camp and more. Jot it down on your calendar with hopes it can happen, and make plans to join us!

Check us out on Facebook!

For updates and announcements, if you are a Facebook user, check out and "*like*" our page on Facebook: **Major County OSU Extension.**

Canning Workshop– Fruits

We have been able to schedule Extension Foods Specialist Barbara Brown again this summer to come share her expertise with us. On Wednesday, June 10 starting at 10:00 a.m. in the exhibit building at the fairgrounds, we will learn about Canning Fruits. Full details on this hands-on workshop will be available as it gets closer but if you want to attend, please call the OSU Extension Center at 580-227-3786 and sign up now– space will be limited.

Cookies and/or Fruit for 4-H Camp

It will be here before we know it....plans are being made for Tri County 4-H Camp on June 17, 18 & 19. Would your group be willing to provide fresh fruit and/or homemade cookies? We would need them at the OSU Extension Center by Tuesday, June 16. Thank you in advance!

Quilt Block Challenge

Fabric kits will be available on May 1 for year two of this Major County OHCE project– the Quilt Block Challenge! This is a great way to promote our organization. Please see the informational insert in this newsletter with full details.

Also, tickets will be available soon for all OHCE members to offer the opportunity to win the recently completed quilt from year one. It is beautiful! Watch your email and snail mail boxes for more information.

Jelly Roll Lap Quilt Workshop

See the insert in this newsletter for details on a Jelly Roll Quilt Workshop set for Friday, July 10 starting at 9:00 a.m. in the exhibit building at the county fairgrounds. Share information about this opportunity with your friends too! Please take note of the registration deadline of July 1.

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Food Handlers: Food Safety Training

Choose from one of two dates:

-Wednesday, April 15, 2020

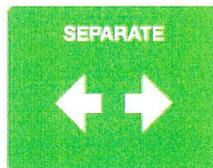
OR

-Wednesday, April 22, 2020

-2:30 P.M.

-Online Format Only

(participants will need internet access)



Everyone is welcome to participate in either of these **free online** Food Safety and Sanitation classes presented by the Major County OSU Extension Service. This is a basic food safety class that will last approximately 1 & 1/2 hours. Anyone who is currently working in any capacity with food service is encouraged to attend. All participants passing the final exam will receive a certificate.

To register for a class or for more information, contact:
Dana Baldwin, Extension Educator- FCS/4-H & CED
at the Major County Cooperative Extension Service.
Please register by Monday, April 13.

We will need your name, phone number and email address.

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EXTENSION



Major County OHCE Quilt Block Challenge 2020



Guidelines for the 2020 Major County Fair

The Major County Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE) Association is sponsoring a *Quilt Block Challenge*. The winner will be determined by viewer's choice voting during the 2020 Major County Fair on September 10, 11 & 12.

- A \$5.00 participation fee is due when you pick up your fabric kit which is available at the Major County OSU Extension Center, located on the first floor of the county courthouse in Fairview.
- You will be provided one fat-quarter of the designated fabric. You must use the designated fabric. You may add any other 100% cotton fabric to complete your block.
- Your block may be of any design (original, traditional, etc.) as long as it measures a 12 ½" x 12 ½" square.
- You may only enter one quilt block per kit. (Multiple kits can be purchased.)
- Finished quilt blocks should be turned in at the Major County OSU Extension Center no later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 3, 2020 so they can be prepared for display at the fair for judging. (They will be displayed in the Exhibit Building.)
- This contest is open to any resident of Major County.
- All quilt blocks become the property of Major County OHCE. If you have questions, please call the OSU Extension Office at 580-227-3786.

PREMIUMS to be paid by Major County OHCE

\$25---1st \$20---2nd \$15---3rd \$10---4th \$5---5th

After the fair, the quilt blocks will be made into a quilt; donations will be accepted and it will be given away at the 2021 Major County Fair to benefit OHCE High School and Adult Scholarships.

2020 Fabric Kits will be available starting May 1!

-2020 fabric is shades of orange, red and green flowers on yellow and cream-



Tickets are available for the opportunity to win the 2019 Quilt Block Challenge quilt. A suggested donation per ticket is one for \$1 or six for \$5 and tickets are available from Major County OHCE members.



OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION SERVICE

JELLY ROLL LAP QUILT WORKSHOP



Friday, July 10, 2020

9:00 a.m. start time

Major County Fairgrounds in Fairview

Participants will complete a lap quilt made with jelly roll fabric strips.
(Fabric will be a variety of prints and colors.)

Fee is \$60 and includes snacks, drinks and lunch.

Participants will need to bring your own sewing machine, extension cord,
fabric scissors, straight pins, measuring tape, iron & ironing board.

Please **RSVP** and pay the fee no later than **Wednesday, July 1.**
Contact the Major County OSU Extension Center with questions.

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Newsletter Editor:



Oklahoma Home & Community Education, Inc. (OHCE) is a local and state wide partner with Cooperative Extension which brings the best knowledge from OSU to its members. Join a local OHCE group and enjoy programs that help make Oklahomans be their best.

www.OHCE.okstate.edu



Family & Consumer Sciences assists communities, families, youth and individuals address issues of health, wealth and well-being through research-based Extension education and programs that are proven to work.