



TULSA COUNTY
EXTENSION

STRENGTHENING OKLAHOMA FAMILIES

Family and Consumer Sciences News

Gearing Up for Fall Home Energy Management



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 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.

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If you receive the monthly newsletter by mail and would like to receive it by email, please call Roxanne at 918-746-3706. Receiving it by email would greatly reduce our printing and postage expenses.

Thank you!

Extracurricular Activities Help Kids Make the Grade and Learn Life Lessons

Books and lectures are often considered key learning modes for students going back to school, but extracurricular activities can prove just as important.

Whether it is playing video games, hanging out with friends or talking on the phone, kids will find their own ways to fill time unless given direction. Approved extracurricular activities can channel their time constructively, said Ron Cox, [Oklahoma State University Extension](#) Marriage and Family Specialist.



Music, theatre, sports, debate and similar activities do an excellent job of keeping children occupied throughout the late afternoon and early evening until working parents can make it home.

“Such activities also serve as real-time laboratories where students can develop critical life skills such as leadership, teamwork and dealing with adversity,” Cox said. “As an example, 4-H includes lots of service projects that give kids hands-on experience with helping others, generosity and self-sacrifice. There aren’t a lot of places where kids can learn these types of lessons.”

Several research studies have shown extracurricular outlets also can have a positive effect on students’ performance in the classroom. Children active in outside activities generally post higher grades compared with those who are less involved.

Involvement in activities beyond academics also gives students a chance to connect with positive adult role models, which research indicates provides a number of benefits.

“Students who have at least one other caring adult in their lives, in addition to a parent, tend to do better academically, socially and in terms of avoiding drug use and teen pregnancy,” Cox said.

Organized extracurricular activities are available through schools, community groups, churches and other organizations. Families should be able to find activities that fit within their schedules and budgets as well as meet kids’ interests.

“Start by allowing kids to experience a variety of activities and eventually let them gravitate to the ones they most enjoy,” he said. “Extracurricular activities can be incredibly important to kids growing into positive role models and contributing citizens of our state.”

Source: <https://extension.okstate.edu/programs/back-to-school-resources/extracurricular-activities-help-kids-make-the-grade-learn-life-lessons.html>





Everyone knows how healthy fruits and veggies are for us. That's indisputable. But, what we are starting to understand and appreciate is just how good they can make us *feel*! In fact, there's a growing body of evidence globally that eating fruits and veggies is predictive of increased happiness, life satisfaction, and well-being.

And, the Produce for Better Health Foundation's (PBH) research indicates that those Americans who eat fruits and veggies most days per week say that they experience physical, emotional, and social benefits now and into the future.

Talk about a simple way to get your happy on! Yet, close to 9 in 10 Americans still do not get enough!

Celebrating the importance of produce in our lives is a no-brainer. But, many of us need help actually making it happen. So, we'll throw out some tips and tricks to get you started!

Think of how many times you eat per day. What if you worked fruits and/or veggies in just 1-2 of those times? Note how awesome you feel! And, repeat.

Find what works for you and create your fruits and veggie habits. Everyone is different and what works for you may not work for your parents, best friend, coworker, or neighbor. So, the first step is trial and error to figure out what ways are good for you. Then, keep up the good work!

There's no right or wrong way to Have A Plant®! Fresh is great, for sure, but, it's not the only way to score some fruits and veggie credit! Here are some ideas you can try throughout the day:

- Adding dried fruit to oatmeal for breakfast is a great way to add flavor and nutrition, as well as feel full for a while after.
- Did you know cereal is one of the most frequent ways people enjoy fruit? Consider pairing fresh fruit with cereal for a quick and easy, plant-packed breakfast, snack or even dinner!
- Throw frozen berries in with your yogurt for a snack.
- Think salads are just all about the veggies? Canned fruit makes for a sweet complement to your favorite greens and pickled veggies can add a twist you won't forget!
- Need some quick energy? Grab a glass of 100% fruit juice to quench your thirst and hold you over until dinner.
- Throw a handful of frozen veggies into your morning omelet.
- Sun-dried tomatoes add texture and bold flavor to your favorite pasta recipe.
- Using 100% vegetable juice as the liquid in your smoothies add nutrients *and* save calories.
- Low on time for dinner prep? Use some canned tomatoes, beans, ground meat, and your go-to spices into a crock pot or Instapot and come home to a house that smells great and dinner that's ready for the table.

At the end of the day, we just want more people to eat more fruits and vegetables – the plants that people aren't getting enough of. And what better time than during National Fruits & Veggies Month to start incorporating more into your daily routine. So, here's a plan: Have A Plant®! For more information visit www.fruitsandveggies.org.



5th Annual Fall Holiday Demonstration Day

It's BACK! OHCE-TC is celebrating the upcoming holiday season with a fun day of craft and food demonstrations to get your holiday creativity pumping.

Sign up today to reserve your spot and don't forget to *bring a friend* so they can share in this event.



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2021
8:45AM - 1:00PM
MEMORIAL DRIVE UMC
(15TH AND MEMORIAL)
7903 E. 15TH STREET, TULSA
\$12/PERSON



REGISTRATION INCLUDES DEMONSTRATIONS, BOOKLET, DOOR PRIZES, LUNCH AND INFORMATIONAL GROUP FAIR

Event Schedule

8:45am—Check in
9:00am to 12:00pm—Demonstrations
12:00 to 1:00pm—Lunch & OHCE Group Fair

***** Registration & Payment due by October 8, 2021 *****

OHCE Group: _____ or Guest: _____
Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Amount Enclosed: _____

Mail Registration to:

OHCE—Tulsa County
Jean Parks, Treasurer
c/o OSU Extension Office
4116 East 15th St
Tulsa, OK 74112

Make check payable to OHCE-TC



Registration includes demonstrations, booklet, door prizes, lunch and informational group fair. Call Deborah (918) 381-3278 or Christina (918) 284-8256 for more information or questions.



SHOUT OUT FROM SHARI

A Huge Shout out, again, for everyone that helped with the fair! It was a huge success. From our OHCE Gift Shop to our Silent Auction - we raised money to continue serving our community and to be able to offer Tulsa County OHCE Scholarships! Donna Dunkerson was the winner of the beautiful Cathedral Quilt that Pat Thomas donated for the proceeds to go to our Scholarship Fund. THANK YOU, PAT! Our Membership Tea was so much fun! We honored our members for their years of service and remembered our members who are no longer with us. We announced the Scholarship Winners and had a great time! A Big Shout out to MILO'S TEA for sponsoring our Membership tea this year! I look forward to seeing what 2022 will bring!

Ashlee Overall and I, along with 8 other Tulsa County members, attended the State OHCE Meeting in OKC. Tulsa County took home several Report Awards! Congratulations to our winners! A Shout Out to Ashlee for putting together our OHCE Board showing our winners! Please stop by and take a look at it the next time you're at the Extension Office!

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the Fall Business Meeting, on 09-21....be sure to invite a friend to attend with you and then stay and participate in our Fall Fun Day after the meeting! *Nuts About OHCE, Shari*



The Membership Committee is hard at work! The **Fall Fun Day is TUESDAY, September 21st at 1:00 pm**. We will have a variety of projects that you will be able to Make and Take! Ashlee Overall will do a Cooking Demonstration! The cost is only \$5, you can pay at the door! If you bring a friend, then they are FREE! Please **RSVP** to Shari Munroe by email or text by **Fri. Sept. 17th**. YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS MEMBERSHIP FUN DAY! (PS - We will have door prizes!)

WHAT'S HAPPENING



September:

- 6: Labor Day – Extension Office Closed
- 6: 7:00 pm President's Quarterly Zoom Meeting
- 13: 10:30 am Chat and Create
- 17: RSVP for Fall Fun Day with Shari Munroe
- 21: 9:00 am Board Meeting
- 10:00 am Business Meeting, 4-H Gate Signs \$\$ due
- 1:00 pm Fall Fun Day, \$5.00 at the door, RSVP by the 17th
- 27: 10:30 am Chat and Create

October:

- 11: 10:30 am Chat and Create
- 15: 2022 Member Dues with Member List & Group Officer form **DUE** to the Extension Office
- 16: 8:45am - 1:00pm, Fall Holiday Demonstration Day, \$12.00 @ Memorial Drive UMC, 7903 E. 15th St. See pg.4 for more details.
- 25: 10:30 am Chat and Create

Congratulations to the 2021 Scholarship winners.

- 1st place \$1,200 to Abigail Nunn
- 2nd place \$1,000 to Kaylynn Mills
- 3rd place \$750 to Amber Smith

There were also Rustic Cuff Bracelets given to each of our groups to help continue the excitement of our award presentations. Remember to report back to Cheryell Romere, Scholarship Chairperson about how your group used the bracelet to encourage fund raising for next year's scholarship funds.

~Cheryell Romere, Scholarship Chairperson

Don't forget to submit your design for the 2021 holiday luncheon program. The theme is **Christmas Memories**. Location is 15th Street United Methodist Church, Wednesday December 1, 2021 at 11 am.

~ Glenda Meinheit, Holiday Luncheon Chairperson

Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE), consists of six groups that meet in and around Tulsa. The groups meet once a month, at various times. The groups meet in at libraries, churches or community centers. To start or join a group in your neighborhood or community, call the Tulsa County OSU Extension Office at 918-746-3706.



OHCE UPDATES



OHCE-TC is hosting our 5th Annual Fall Holiday Demonstration Day on Saturday, October 16th at Memorial Drive UMC from 9:00 am until 1 pm. (Registration starts at 8:45 am)

Demo Day registration fee is \$12 and includes the demonstrations, the demo booklet (patterns, instructions and recipes), door prizes and lunch. And Demo Day is a great way to introduce family and friends to OHCE. The flyer and registration form are included in this newsletter.

We still need a couple more presenters for Demo Day. Please contact Christina or me if you (or someone you know) has a holiday (Halloween, Thanksgiving or Christmas) craft, food, or gift idea you would like to demonstrate making for our group members and their guests.

~ Deborah McIntyre (918) 381-3378, Christina David (918) 284-8456, Demo Day Co-chairs

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

"Can Resource Management determine if it is to your advantage to have utility companies use monthly averaging for your bill?"

~Dolores Williams, Resource Management Chairperson

10 Tips for September Healthy Living

September Is Healthy Aging® Month

<https://healthyaging.net/healthy-aging-month/10-tips-for-september-is-healthy-aging-month/>

~Charline Romine, Healthy Living Committee Chairman



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Michelle Bonicelli

Michelle Bonicelli
Family and Consumer Sciences Educator
Tulsa County OSU Extension Service

FAMILY ISSUES

As you know each year we gather items for the Tulsa County Shelter to donate at our Christmas Party. This year I thought it might be good to begin a little early. So, each month we will present a list of items that are needed. Please keep all items you do buy until we meet for our Holiday Party December 1, 2021. Below is the list for Women. Keep it handy and if you see sales you can buy more than one. The next four months there will be a different list for a different section of the shelter. As always thank you so much for your generosity.

~ Donna Spielman, Family Issues Chairperson

September—Children's needs
October—Men's needs
November—Household Items

September Suggestions:

1. Toys!!!
2. Barbie Dolls
3. Any kind of toy cars
4. Coloring Books
5. Crayons
6. Sidewalk chalk