With the 4th of July holiday just around the corner, many Oklahoma families are making plans to hit the pool or local lake in an effort to stay cool.

If the plan includes being around a body of water, make sure you take precautions, especially with young children, said Debbie Richardson, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension parenting assistant specialist.

“Accidents around water can occur very quickly. In fact, most drowning victims were out of their parents’ sight for less than five minutes,” Richardson said.

“Children, especially those less than 5 years old, are vulnerable to submersion injuries because they haven’t developed the knowledge, reasoning, understanding, physical strength and coordination to recognize their risks and how to handle themselves in water. Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death among children ages 1 to 14.”

Most children under the age of 5 do not know how to swim. Even if a child that age has taken swimming lessons, it should never be assumed the child would be able to save himself in the event of an emergency situation.

Richardson pointed out that young children are dependent upon adults who know how to maintain a safe environment around the water and also know rescue and resuscitation methods should the need arise.

While swimming pools, oceans, ponds and lakes pose a danger for children under the age of 5, any collection of water can be risky.

“Any place water can gather, such as a bucket, basin or sink can be dangerous. However, bathtubs and swimming pools pose the greatest risk for children 5 years old or younger in Oklahoma,” she said.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health reports that between 1988 and 2006, a total of 2,153 Oklahomans suffered a fatal or hospitalized submersion injury. Of those, 1,518 victims died. Children between the ages of 0 and 4 accounted for 591 submersions, including 125 bathtub and 289 swimming pool submersion injuries.

Richardson said it is important for everyone to keep in mind that drowning can occur in a variety of circumstances – during water recreation or when a child is left unsupervised for even seconds in the bathtub or around the home with access to pools and hot tubs.

“A child can drown in as little as one inch of water, and drowning is usually quick and silent. A child will lose consciousness two minutes after submersion, with irreversible brain damage occurring within four to six minutes,” she said.

Every home with a pool should have layers of protection in an effort to keep children safe. These layers include placing a barrier around the pool to prevent access, using pool alarms, closely supervising every child and being prepared in the event of an emergency. Keep safety equipment by the pool.

Pool fences or surrounding walls should be a minimum of four feet high and completely surround the pool. Gates in the fence or walls need to be self-closing and self-latching. Also, the handles on the gates should be out of the reach of small children.

Remember that even small wading pools can be dangerous for children who are not properly supervised. Children should be supervised at all times.

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**WHAT'S INSIDE?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loose Change ................................. 2</th>
<th>Drinks Spiked with Rohypnol ............. 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follow these Consumer Fireworks ........... 3</td>
<td>Super Stir Fry ................................ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Skip Vacation: Just Watch Costs .... 4</td>
<td>Why Don’t Generic Drugs Look the Same 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun in the Sun ................................ 5</td>
<td>Save Some Green by Going Green ........ 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a Family Parade ....................... 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Loose Change**

What’s your share of $16 Billion?

We all have some – in a jar on the dresser, in a desk drawer, in the car, maybe even in the cushions on the couch. Loose change accumulates in various locations of our households. Money saved, but it is not working for us.

Did you know that the average family accumulates about $99 in loose change each year? The US Treasury estimates that $15 billion dollars in loose change is sitting unproductively in homes and cars across America – and not a nickel of that money earns interest.

It is time to get that money gathered up and deposited in a financial institution where it can go to work by earning interest. Saving that little handful of loose change every day doesn’t seem like much, but it could turn into quite a savings or retirement account one day.

**Feed the Pig**

It’s easy to get the whole family involved with their own banks. Empty the change out of your pocket and into your piggy bank at the end of the day. Do that every day until the piggy bank is full. Count 50 pennies ($.50), 50 dimes ($5.00), 40 nickels ($2.00), and 40 quarters ($10.00) and wrap with the appropriate coin wrappers.

Take the money to the bank and deposit it straight into your account, as opposed to trading for paper cash and spending it!

**Caution: Counting machines cost you money**

Be wary of the automatic coin counting machines at grocery stores and other locations. They often keep 7 – 9% of your money – that’s $7 - $9 of the approximately $100 it took you a year to accumulate. Keep your cash by counting and rolling your coins yourself.

It all starts one coin at a time. Saving 50 cents a day in loose change adds up to $15 a month. Cut soda pop consumption by one liter a week; that $6 a month. Bring lunch to work; that’s $60 a month. Eat out fewer times a month; you save $30. Bounce one less check; that’s $20. Pay credit card bills on time to avoid a late fee for $25.

Look for more great ideas at www.feedthepig.org and www.americasaves.org

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**Drinks Spiked with Rohypnol**

This spring several confirmed reports were received by authorities near Oklahoma college campuses in which women’s beverages were laced with the sedative Rohypnol.

Although Rohypnol (AKA roofies, or date rape drug) is not FDA approved for use in the United States, it is often used in Mexico and other countries for surgical procedures and causes an individual to feel drowsy, forgetful, and provides a spacey feeling. Rohypnol has no taste or odor so when dissolved in a drink it is hard to detect. Rohypnol can cause a kind-of amnesia affect. This results in a person’s inability to remember where they were or what they did while under its affects. Rohypnol may render a person incapable of making rational decisions of defending themselves. Rohypnol, like any drug, is more dangerous when combined with alcohol. Rohypnol can be mixed into beverages such as tea, coffee, milk, soda as well as alcoholic beverages.

Awareness of your surroundings at social gatherings and a few precautions can greatly reduce chances your drink may contain the sedative and date rape drug, Rohypnol.

**Precautions to be taken include:**

- Do not take drinks or cigarettes from anyone.
- Do no leave drinks or cigarettes unattended.
- If you have left your drink unattended do not drink it.
- Make sure you see your drink being poured or pour it yourself.

**Steps to take if you believe your drink has been spiked:**

- If you start feeling odd and know you can’t be drunk, go immediately to a safe place or tell a friend you trust. Under no circumstance let a stranger or someone you don’t trust take you anywhere.
- Call the Police! There are tests available to show Rohypnol in your system but it has to be given in a timely manner.

Additional information can be obtained by going to http://www.abovetheinfluence.com.
**Follow these Consumer Fireworks Safety Tips**

Who doesn’t enjoy seeing the sky light up with multiple colors either for a festive occasion like the beginning of OK Mozart or an annual Fourth of July celebration. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), an estimated 10,800 people are treated in U.S. emergency departments for fireworks-related injuries annually. Fireworks are exciting, fun and festive but also very dangerous causing serious burn and eye injuries. Educating the public concerning the safe use of fireworks is vital this time of year especially during the month prior to this national holiday.

The National Council of Fireworks Safety recommends that consumers only buy fireworks from a licensed store and stand. Never buy fireworks from an individual’s house, or out of someone’s car. Such fireworks are likely to be illegal explosives that can cause serious injuries. Consumer fireworks are regulated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission and are packaged in bright colors and have safety warnings on the packaging. The packaging sets forth the country of origin, which is normally China. Typical consumer fireworks include fountains, cones, sparklers, fire crackers, bottle rockets, roman candles, ground spinners and multi-shot products. Illegal explosives are often unpackaged and are wrapped with plain brown paper. Most likely they do not have any safety warnings or place of manufacture.

Always make sure fireworks are legal in the location that has been selected for display. Local governments have specific regulations regarding use of fireworks. In order to promote safety during fireworks displays, the National Council and Consumer Product Safety Commission urges individuals to follow these important tips.

- Only use fireworks outdoors.
- Never give fireworks to young children and always wear safety glasses.
- Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- Be sure other individuals are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves, and flammable materials.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- Always keep a bucket of water, or water hose nearby in case of a malfunction or fire.
- Alcohol and fireworks do not mix!

Prior planning and preparing for the evening’s fireworks display will help promote safety. Make sure that the designated shooter has a shooting area and that the individuals watching the display are in a spectator area far enough away from the launching site.

Preplanning makes for a safe and fun backyard fireworks display. For more information on firework safety visit the CDC or fireworks safety website at http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety or http://www.fireworksafety.com.

-Gale A. Mills, Washington County Family and Consumer Sciences Educator

### Super Stir Fry

**Choose 5 vegetables** (1/2 cup of each)
- Onion
- Broccoli
- Celery
- Carrots
- Squash
- Peppers
- Zucchini
- Mushrooms
- Cauliflower

**Choose 1 sauce** (about ¼ cup)
- Lite/Low Sodium Soy Sauce
- Teriyaki marinade
- Bottled Stir Fry Sauce

**Choose 1 starch** 2 cup per person (cook according to package directions)
- White Rice
- Brown Rice
- Rice Noodles
- Whole Wheat Spaghetti Noodles

**Directions:**
1. Wash and chop selected vegetables into small evenly sized pieces. You may cut them into circles, strips or cubes as desired. A variety of shapes will make the stir fry more pleasing to the eye.
2. Heat a small amount (1 tablespoon or less) of vegetable oil over high heat in 10-inch frying pan, electric skillet or wok.
3. Keeping the heat high, add vegetables to the pan in order of firmness-harder foods first and ending with the softest foods.
4. Toss vegetables to keep from sticking until they are cooked. When stir frying, vegetables should still be crisp and retain their bright color.
5. Add sauce to taste (about ¼ cup). Stir Fry until all vegetables are thoroughly coated.

**Nutrition Information Per Serving**

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<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
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<td>Excellent Source</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>0g</td>
<td>of Vitamin A</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>6g</td>
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<td>of Vitamin C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>2g</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>560g</td>
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Recipe was analyzed using onions, green pepper, broccoli, celery, carrots and low sodium soy sauce. Nutritional information will vary with other vegetable combinations. Analysis does not include rice or noodles. Makes 2 servings. Serving Size 1 cup.
Don’t Skip Vacation; Just Watch Costs

One of the first things many people trim from their budget during economic down-turns is vacation. That’s unfortunate because stressful times are when we most need to recharge our batteries. Taking on additional debt to finance a vacation is itself stressful, however. The following are a few tips for taking a well-deserved break that won’t break the bank.

Staycations. Last summer’s astronomical gas and airfare price hikes popularized “staycations,” where people vacation close to home and explore their own backyard – sometimes literally.

A few ideas:

• If gardening relaxes you, dedicate time to sprucing up your yard.
• Become a local tourist. Research what online travel sites and the Chamber of Commerce recommend for visitor activities. Many businesses provide local-resident discounts to encourage return visits.
• For a minor splurge, visit a local resort and take advantage of its amenities. Most offer off-days where rates are lower.
• Enjoy crowd-free shopping and errands while everyone else is at work.

Uncover hidden vacation costs. If you do travel, make sure to budget beyond normal airfare, hotel, rental car and meal expenses. Consider such items as surcharges for extra or overweight luggage, sales and hotel taxes, babysitters, tips, taxis, rail and transit passes, admission costs, sporting equipment rental, and special clothing or accessory requirements.

Double-check prices. You can find great deals on airfares, hotels and rental cars by comparison shopping online. But beware: Before clicking “confirm” to finalize your purchase, make sure the final price matches the initial quote. Fares can jump in just minutes or the seat being booked can suddenly become unavailable.

Try haggling. With so many people cutting back on travel, many tourist-oriented businesses are hurting. Don’t be afraid to request incentives like an extra night’s lodging, free parking or shuttle service, or meal vouchers. At worst they’ll just say no or perhaps offer some other perk. And always ask for member discounts if you belong to organizations like AAA or AARP – 10 or 15 percent here and there can add up.

Be flexible. Try to avoid peak travel times and routes. Flying mid-week or from more remote airports can save a bundle. Airlines frequently offer cash rewards or free tickets to those willing to be bumped to a later flight. Just make sure you won’t lose any deposits at your destination.

Don’t forego vacation – you’ve earned it. Just be cautious about how expenses can add up.

Source: Author Jason Alderman @ http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/personalfinance/experts/practicalmoney matters/columns/20090515_vacation.php

Why Don’t Generic Drugs Look the Same?

When a brand-name drug first comes on the market, the manufacturer has a patent on the drug that prevents any other companies from making or selling that drug. When the patent expires, companies can apply for FDA approval to sell identical generic versions of the drug.

Generic drugs are required to have the same active ingredients and to work the same as the brand-name. This doesn’t also mean that generic drug companies can copy the appearance of the brand-name drug. If the appearance, shape, name, and/or color of the drug is trademarked, it cannot be copied. Unlike patents, which last a maximum of 20 years, trademarks never expire. Traditionally, drug companies have only trademarked the names of their drugs, but, in the past several years, many have started to make the appearance of their pills part of their marketing campaigns. For example, Pfizer has trademarked both the name Viagra and the well-known blue diamond shape of the Viagra pill and AstraZeneca has trademarked not just the name Nexium, but also the phrase, “Purple Pill.” By making consumers associate a particular appearance of a pill with the medicine contained in the pill, the drug company builds what’s called “brand Identity” and “brand Loyalty.”

The main thing to keep in mind: The same generic drug can be made by many different drug companies, and each of their pills may look different, not just from the brand-name pill, but from each other. If your pharmacy changes which generic drug company it buys your medication from, or if you switch pharmacies, your pills might suddenly look different than they did the last time you filled your prescription. This doesn’t mean that you got the wrong pills. However, if you are at all uncertain or concerned, talk to your pharmacist. Better safe than sorry.

To learn more go to: Consumer Reports Best Drugs at www.CRBestBuyDrugs.org or to www.genericsarepowerful.org.
Fun in the Sun

Most people love sunny, warm days when they can get outside for fun and soak up the sun. But, sun is one good thing you can have too much of – and not even know you’ve had too much until much later, when you’re diagnosed with skin cancer. Fortunately, 19 out of 20 cases of skin cancer diagnosed are less aggressive forms called basal cell or squamous cell cancers, which are fairly easy to treat. But five percent are melanoma, a much more serious form of skin cancer.

Know it like the back of your hand

It’s important to know your skin and the signs of skin cancer. If you notice any unusual moles or marks on your skin, watch them closely. The most common skin cancers (basal and squamous cell) can look like a small, skin-colored or red knob. The more dangerous melanoma usually begins as a mole that seems to change color or size. What are the signs that tell you to have a doctor look at a mole? Just remember ABCD:

- Asymmetry: The mole is not round
- Border: The border is irregular with jagged edges, not smooth.
- Color: The color can be uneven across the mole, it can change, or it may seem very different from the other moles on your body.
- Diameter: Cancerous moles are usually larger than 6 mm (the size of a pea or pencil eraser).

Skin cancer is usually caused by the skin’s exposure to ultraviolet rays from the sun. The more sun you’re exposed to over your lifetime, the higher your risk of developing cancer.

It’s estimated that up to 80 percent of a person’s total exposure to the sun happens before 18 years of age. Because of this, it’s good to teach children healthy sun habits from the start. One serious sunburn in childhood can increase future cancer risk by as much as 50 percent.

No such thing as a healthy tan

There is a common myth that if a person tans well, they’re protected from these harmful rays. Not true! While it is true that fair-haired, blue-eyed people are most prone to burning and, therefore, are more susceptible to the sun’s rays, even “healthy” tans are really just damage control – they’re your body’s way of trying to protect itself from the sun. But the damage is already done and can’t be reversed. Years of sun worshipping, be it outside or in a tanning salon, will eventually show up later on in life as wrinkles, poor skin elasticity, and possible skin cancer.

The sun, however, is also very important to our health. It provides us with vitamin D (which we need for our bones), and it can lift our spirits. In fact, there’s a form of depression called seasonal affective disorder (SAD) that can happen when there’s more darkness than daylight – sufferers feel “down” during the winter and much better when summer comes. So staying holed up deep inside isn’t good either.

As with most good things, moderation and good sense are the keys. The goal is to have fun outside but to stay safe at the same time. Here are some basic rules:

- Cover up whenever possible. A longer cotton skirt, for example, might feel cooler on a hot day than a pair of shorts, and will help guard you from the sun.
- Wear a hat. Hats keep the sun’s rays off the scalp, face, and back of the neck, prime areas for skin cancer. A good hat will also shelter and protect your eyes from the sun’s powerful rays.
- Use sunscreen whenever you’re outside, even if the sun doesn’t seem particularly strong. Damaging ultraviolet rays can penetrate through clouds. Always apply sunscreen with a minimum PSF (sun protection factor) of 15. Follow the directions closely and reapply the sunscreen on a regular basis throughout the day, especially after you’ve been swimming or sweating. Ask you pharmacist or doctor for their product recommendations and advice on proper use.
- Avoid the sun when it’s at its peak. It’s strongest between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., so use that time to do activities indoors if possible.
- If you take prescription drugs, check to see if they can make you more sensitive to the sun. If you’re not sure, ask you pharmacist.

If, despite being careful, you still get a sunburn, treat it as you would any other kind of burn:

- Apply cool, wet compresses for 24 to 48 hours.
- Don’t apply skin creams within the first two days.
- Drink a lot of water to stay hydrated.

Very severe burns, the kind that produce blisters, are often treated in clinics with dressings. If you’re not sure if your burn is severe, have it checked.

Source: www.aarp.com
Save Some Green by Going Green with Grocery Shopping

Perhaps you haven’t yet started recycling the many containers that package food. And, maybe you have limited access to some of the “greener” food products on the market. Yet there are things you can do if you’re interested in a “greener,” more environmentally friendly household. Read on for some easy steps you can take right now. They also will save you money, adding a little extra green to your wallet!

1. **Size Matters.** When choosing between a large container and several small containers that add up to the same volume: Consider whether buying the large container would serve the same purpose and save you money? For example, do you really need to buy individual boxes (and more packaging) of juice if they all are drunk in the same week and at your kitchen table?

2. **It's in the bag.** We could all carry our own reusable shopping bags when we go shopping. Or we can reuse any plastic grocery bags we accumulate to line small wastebaskets. Put a few bags in the bottom of the waste basket BEFORE you line it, so there’s another one ready to use after one is filled.

3. **Gotta have a plan!** Plan ahead and shop less often for groceries or shop in conjunction with other errands taking you near a grocery store. The result is a reduction in the cost of fuel.

4. **Practice the 3 R’s.** Produce less waste AND save money by practicing the 3 R’s of reduce, reuse and recycle. Here are three examples in relation to throwing away leftover food. Not only does tossing leftovers waste money, it also wastes the energy resources and packaging materials associated with the tossed food.
   - **Reduce** the amount of leftover food by preparing smaller portions of foods that frequently produce leftovers OR…
   - **Reuse** leftovers by serving them again in a day or two or freezing them for future use, OR
   - **Recycle** leftovers into a different type of meal; for example – add that extra rice to a soup the next night.

5. **Don’t be a “spoil” – sport.** Throwing away spoiled food is related to tossing leftovers. Reduce the amount of spoiled food that gets tossed through such practices as:
   - Read labels for “use by,” “best if used by,” or “expiration” dates.
   - Refrigerate and freeze foods at recommended temperatures – 0 degrees F or lower for freezers and 40 degrees F or lower for the refrigerator.

6. **Drink to this.** Buy a reusable water bottle and fill it with tap water. Your investment soon will pay for itself.

7. **Bulk it up.** Some products purchased at the grocery store, such as hand soap, can be purchased in big bottles that are used to refill a smaller bottle size. Reduce the cost and the packaging by refilling the smaller bottle.

Credit: by Alice Henneman, MS, RD and Lorene Bartos, MS, Extension Educators and University of Nebraska-Extension at http://lancaster.unl.edu.

HAVE A FAMILY PARADE

Have everyone get in a line and have a fun family parade. You can march, bounce, and skip along your parade routes through your house or out in the yard. What day this week will you and your family have a parade?

www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

The Kay County Extension Office will be closed on Friday, July 3rd in observance of Independence Day!
THE LOST LADYBUG PROJECT
This is the ultimate summer science project for kids and adults!

Besides being incredibly cool and charismatic ladybugs are also essential predators in both farms and forests that keep us from being overrun with pests (like aphids and mealy bugs). In many areas, the native ladybugs are being replaced by exotic ones. This has happened very quickly and scientists don't know how this shift happened, what impact it will have (e.g. will the exotic species be able to control pests as well as our familiar native ones always have) and how to prevent more native species from becoming so rare.

Over the past twenty years several native ladybug species that were once very common have become extremely rare. During this same time several species of ladybugs from other places have greatly increased both their numbers and range. To be able to help the nine spotted ladybug and other ladybug species, scientists need to have detailed information on which species are still out there and how many individuals are around. Entomologists at Cornell can identify the different species but there are too few of them to sample in enough places to find the really rare ones. They need you to be their legs, hands and eyes. If you could look for ladybugs and send pictures of them on Email, the scientist can start to gather the information needed. They are very interested in the rare species but any pictures will help.

1 COLLECT Go out and collect ladybugs.
2 TAKE NOTES Note the date, time, location, and habitat (for example meadow, garden or wetlands).
3 TAKE THEIR PICTURE If you find any ladybugs, take pictures of them all. Please do not kill the insects, especially if the are rare finds. Either digital or film photos are acceptable.
4 SEND THE INFO To send this information with digital photos, go to www.lostladybug.org. Or you can send color prints to Lost Ladybug Project, Cornell University, Dept. of Entomology, 4117 Comstock Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853
5 RETURN LADYBUGS Release the ladybugs safely where you found them.

Those wishing to participate can visit www.lostladybug.org for tips on finding and photographing ladybugs and submitting photos, instructions for a bug net, coloring pages, and more.

Getting Kids to Talk About Their Day

Does this parent/child conversation sound familiar? "Hi, Jamie. How was your day?" "Okay."
"How was school?" "Fine."
"What did you do today at school?" "Nothing."
"Well, you must have done something." "Just regular stuff."
"How was your lunch?" "I don't know. Okay, I guess."

If this sounds familiar and you would like your kids to be just a little more talkative, you might experiment. Dr. Charles Fay, Love and Logic, Inc., calls this the "30 Minute Rule." It's based upon the fact that kids watch our every move, copying us in their subconscious drive to learn how to be big.

For the next 2 months, avoid the temptations to ask questions of your kids during the first 30 minutes after they come home from day care, school or other activities. Instead, talk with excitement or enthusiasm about your own day instead.

Examples:
"It's good to see you. Guess what I got to do today… And not only that, I learned…and I heard…and I couldn't wait to tell you about it. I hope you had a great day."

One of these days you'll get a surprise; it will sound like, "But Mom. I've got to tell you what happened today."

By the way, this works great with spouses . . .