Make water safety a top priority this summer

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 submersion, 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.
States have found themselves without a job due to layoffs or business closings.

Many workers in Oklahoma are facing the same situation of going from a full-time worker to standing in the unemployment line.

Hard financial times not only affect the worker, but the entire family, said Sissy Osteen, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension resource management specialist.

“Unemployment means less money coming into the household. This can lead to stress among the adults in the home,” Osteen said. “Parents are worried about paying the bills, keeping a roof over the family’s head, putting food on the table and finding another job as soon as possible. In addition the unemployed person is trying to keep up with requirements for unemployment compensation and discovering the best way to seek new employment.”

The first thing a family should do is sit down and take a hard look at the budget. See where every penny is going and determine what areas you can cut spending. Going out to dinner or the movies, magazine subscriptions and even small expenses such as buying a soda will probably need to stop until your income is restored.

Osteen said there are a number of other ways to cut down expenses without making big sacrifices.

Turn off the lights, television and stereo when not in use. In an effort to conserve both water and gas or electricity, depending on your hot water tank, take shorter showers.

“Now that the weather has warmed up, try drying your clothes on a clothesline instead of using the dryer. Hang up clothes after wearing them to cut down on laundry,” she said. “Bath towels can be used multiple times before being laundered and turn off the water while brushing your teeth.”

At the grocery store check out generic or store brands as they are usually cheaper than brand name products. Get creative with leftovers to create new meals. Walk or ride your bike whenever possible.

If you already have gardening tools, putting in a vegetable garden can help cut down on the cost of food and is a great way to increase family time. It can be considered as entertainment for the family and it is rewarding to grow your own food.

“You may need to think of ways to earn some extra money until permanent employment is found,” Osteen said. “Mowing lawns or having a garage sale can bring in some additional cash. Also consider ways to stretch the money your family does have. Even though the situation may be hard at the moment, there are ways to cut back on spending without feeling like you’ve had to cut out all of the extras in your life. Getting the whole family on board will help make this tough time a little easier to get through and it gives the family an opportunity to discuss how they are feeling about the current situation as they plan for the future.”

Money Saving Tips for Your Home from O G & E: July’s “To-Do” List:

- Keep your thermostat at a constant, comfortable level (75-78 degrees) when you are home. Lowering the thermostat setting too far will not cool your home faster.
- Declare your independence of wasteful energy! A microwave oven cooks up to 75% faster and saves up to 70% of the energy used by a conventional oven.
- At the start of the cooling season, replace the air conditioner filter and check its condition monthly.
- To reduce heat and moisture, run appliances such as ovens, washing machines, dryers and dishwashers in the early morning or evening hours when it’s generally cooler outside.
- Keep shades, blinds and curtains closed. About 40% of unwanted heat comes through windows. Simply drawing blinds and curtains, which act as a layer of insulation, can reduce heat gain.
Surveys say most of us take advantage of the information on food labels. That’s the good news. The bad news is that making sense of it all is more complicated than you might think. It requires mental math skills, the ability to translate scientific jargon and the willingness to cut through a maze of marketing hype.

Here’s what you need to know:

Top 5 Facts to Look for on a Label

**Serving Size**—You’ll find this on the Nutrition Facts label rights below the heading. Despite government’s good intentions, serving sizes are far from standard, particularly for cereals and snack foods. If you typically eat much more or much less than the amount listed, you’ll need to do some quick math. For example, if the serving size is five crackers, but you usually eat 10, you’ll need to double all of the Nutrition Facts numbers. And don’t assume a small package equals one serving. For example, the label on a typical 12-ounce can of soda lists Servings Per Container as 1½.

**Saturated Fat and Trans Fat**—While total fat content is important, saturated and trans fats are the real culprits that clog arteries. If a food is high in fat, it can be redeemed by low levels of these fats. Try to buy foods with less than two grams of saturated fat and zero grams of trans fats per serving. The goal is to limit saturated fats to less than 7% of calories (about 15 grams per 2,000 calories), while limiting trans fats to less than 1% of calories (2 grams per 2,000 calories).

**Fiber**—Always opt for the higher fiber choices. Most of us fall far short of the recommended fiber intake of about 25 grams a day. Ideally, look for foods that provide at least two grams per serving. Breakfast cereals should provide more—at least eight grams per serving.

**Sodium**—Even if everything else is the model of good nutrition—high fiber, low fat, no trans fats—sodium can still be sky high in packaged foods. Your daily intake shouldn’t exceed 2,300 milligrams. Many packaged foods provide 25% to 50% of that in a single serving.

**Sugar**—While sugar isn’t a nutrition no-no per se, it offers nothing but empty calories and often takes the place of more nutritious foods. Unfortunately, food labels don’t distinguish between natural sugars (like the fructose in fruit and the lactose in dairy) and added sugars (sucrose from table sugar or added high-fructose corn syrup). For that, check the ingredient list.

3 Red Flags on the Label

**Trans-Fat-Free**—It’s the new marketing buzz phrase on a slew of snack foods, cookies and margarines. But getting rid of one ingredient doesn’t make a product healthful. On the contrary, some products merely replace trans fats with coconut oil or palm oil, which are high in saturated fats. And they may still be high in fat, calories or sodium. Moreover, even products labeled “zero trans” are allowed to contain up to 0.5 gram per serving.

**Wholesome/Pure/Natural**—What do these terms mean? Nothing. Marketers use these vague claims to imply a product is healthful, but in fact, they have nothing to do with nutritional value. According to the government, “wholesome” simply means “fit for human consumption” (e.g., no insect parts), while “pure” and “natural” have no official definitions. For example, some products are loaded with highly processed high-fructose corn syrup, yet still label themselves “natural.”

**Less or Reduced Sugar**—Nowadays, “reduced sugar” is code for “artificial sweetener added.” This is especially true for yogurts, instant oatmeal, cookies and fruit drinks. But don’t assume less sugar equals low calorie. Often, sugar-free or reduced-sugar foods have as many or even more calories than the originals.

**Bottom Line.** Reading food labels may prolong grocery shopping trips, but if you’re concerned about your health, it’s well worth the time. And practice makes perfect; the more you work at it, the better—and faster—you’ll get.

Source: www.environmentalnutrition.com
Importance of Communication
- When the family is facing tough times, family members need to lean on each other more than usual. Talk to each other respectfully and listen to each other’s concerns.
- Conflict and disagreements are normal, especially when family members are stressed. Give each person a chance to share his or her view of things, without interrupting or judging. Keep an open mind and listen for new information and good ideas.
- In tough times, family schedules and routines sometimes fall apart. You need to keep each other up-to-date on changes in daily routines and any unusual expenses.
- Set aside a regular time for family meetings to share information and concerns. Make sure that finances are not the only topic of discussion and consider ending the meeting with a special family activity or treat.

Keeping Children in the Loop
- Let children know that the family is having temporary difficulties and may have to reduce spending on some items for a while. Try to do this in a confident, calm and honest manner.
- Answer their questions as clearly as you can but don’t burden them with too much information.
- Remember that some children may be worried about what is going on and not show their feelings. Check in with your children to see how they are doing and reassure them that you will work things out as a family.
- Enlist their help and creativity in reducing expenses, especially on family activities. Try to make this a positive and rewarding experience by focusing on challenges instead of disappointments.
- Try to use this time to teach them the difference between wants (an electronic game) versus needs (athletic shoes for P.E. class).

Source: www.eXtension.org

Healthy Living A-Z Presents the Fruit of the Month for July
The Peach

Why peaches are good for you *
One medium peach has only 40 calories and no fat. It provides 8 percent of your daily requirement for fiber and 10 percent of your daily requirement of Vitamin C.

Buying and storing peaches *
Avoid bruised or discolored peaches. Green color indicates immaturity. Shriveling at the stem end or excessive softening are indications of overripe peaches. Choose bright, fresh-looking peaches. Skin color should be creamy or yellow with varying degrees or red blush or mottling, depending on the variety. Ripe peaches should yield to gentle palm pressure.

Unripe peaches should be stored on the countertop in a closed paper bag. Ripe peaches should be kept refrigerated. Peaches continue to ripen after harvest.

Microwave Breakfast Cobbler *
1 can (16 ounces) peaches, sliced and drained
1 can (16 ounces) pears, halves and drained
1 cup (6 ounces) prunes, pitted and halved
1 teaspoon orange peel, grated
1 1/2 cup granola cereal, lowfat
1/3 cup orange juice

In 6-cup shallow microwave bowl toss peaches, pears, prunes, orange peel and orange juice. Top with granola. Microwave on HIGH 5 minutes. Let stand 2 minutes. Spoon into bowls. Serve with plain yogurt if desired. Makes 4 to 6 servings. Can substitute 2-16 ounce cans fruit cocktail for peaches & pears.

Nutrition information: 274 calories; 3g of fat; 0mg cholesterol, 7g fiber; 3mg sodium

Nutrition information and recipe courtesy of aboutproduce.com
Healthy Living A-Z encourages you to eat 5 A Day for better health.
EXHIBIT BUILDING SCHEDULE

Wednesday, Aug. 19th
4-6 p.m.  Take entries

Thursday, Aug. 20th
8-9 a.m.  Entries for HCE Groups
8-9:30 a.m.  Entries for Open Class
8 a.m.-1 p.m.  Entries for Paintings & Photography
10 a.m.  Judge HCE Exhibits
10 a.m.  Judge Open Class Exhibits
2 p.m.  Judge Paintings and Photography
5:30 p.m.  Pie Auction
7:00 p.m.  Beautiful Baby Contest
7:30 p.m.  Square Dancers/Ballroom Dancing
9 p.m.  Buildings Closed

Friday, Aug. 21st
9 a.m.  Exhibit Building Open
9:30-10:30 a.m.  Entries for Floriculture/Flowers
11 a.m.  Judge Floriculture/Flowers
6 p.m.  Talent Show
6:30 p.m.  Table Setting Contest
9 p.m.  Buildings Closed

Saturday, Aug. 22nd
9 a.m.  Exhibit Building Open
10 a.m.  Scrapbooking Check-in
12:30 p.m.  Scrapbooking Judging
6 p.m.  Style Show
6:30 p.m.  Exhibit Building closed
7:00 p.m.  Exhibits Released (Exhibit Building)

Helpful information!  This will be our second year to offer Scrapbooking and Table Setting Live.  New this year will be the Beautiful Baby Contest and Talent Show.  Be sure and read details of new events and help us advertise!

SCRAPBOOK CHALLENGE
Saturday, Aug. 22nd
This new scrapbooking contest is sponsored by Designs by Dennis.  Each contestant will be given a packet of supplies that includes: paper, rub-ons, ribbon, buttons, and tags.  Each contestant must bring photos to complete the page.
10:00 a.m.  Check in.
10:30 a.m.  Contestant begins
12:30 p.m.  Judging begins at 12:30 p.m.
Contestants may bring the following supplies to complete their project (no other supplies will be allowed): paper trimmer, black pen, dry adhesive, wet adhesive, glue dots, crop-a-dial, black & brown distressing ink.  Entries will be judged on quality of craftsmanship, design, originality, creativity, journaling, photos, and page title.

AWARDS
JUNIOR DIVISION (12 years and under)
1st Place – $25.00, 2nd Place -$15.00 3rd Place – $10.00

SENIOR DIVISION (13 years and over)
1st place- $25.00, 2nd Place -$15.00 3rd Place – $10.00

TABLE SETTING CONTEST
Friday, Aug. 21st
5:00 p.m.  Check In
5:30-6:30 p.m.  Decorating time
6:30 p.m.  Judging begins
All entries will be on display until Saturday, August 23rd at 7 p.m.

JUDGING BASED ON:  Eye appeal proportion to table size, functionality, theme continuity, good balance among decorations setting and menu.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS:  Create a table setting for four with a square or round card table.  Table decorating should be limited to tabletop only - no props besides table. Include a menu suitable for your table setting.  Menu should be 5”x8” index card. Skillful hand-craftsmanship by the exhibitor of any element of the table setting will be given consideration in judging. Setting should be in good taste.  You may use real or artificial decorations; just make sure they will hold up for the entire display time.

AWARDS- Sponsored by Designs by Dennis
JUNIOR DIVISION (12 years and under)
1st Place – $15.00 2nd Place – $10.00 3rd Place – $5.00

SENIOR DIVISION (13 years and over)
1st Place – $15.00 2nd Place – $10.00 3rd Place – $5.00

Each contestant may enter only one table setting. One contestant per table setting.

AMATEUR TALENT SHOW
Friday, Aug. 21st
Premiums $15, $10, $5
Entries taken 6:00 p.m.- 6:45 p.m.
Talent Show 7:00 p.m.
Act limited to 1 song if musical, 4 minutes for other.
Provide your own taped music (no piano available).
Groups or individuals may enter.

Age Divisions:
3-8 years old
9-13 years old
14-18 years old

BEAUTIFUL BABY CONTEST
Thursday, August 20    7:00 pm
Registration 6:00 pm to 6:45pm
Awards Sponsored by Tuscany
Premiums $15, $10, $5.00
Adults must accompany child on stage.

Age Divisions:
3-6 months old
7-12 months old
13-18 months old

Categories:
1.  Congeniality  2.  Look Alike
3.  Theme-Holiday  4. Most Hair

For more information, call the Kingfisher County OSU Extension office at 375-3822.
Leadership Conference
A note from Mary Jo Bullis, OHCE State Leadership Development Chair:

The bi-annual Leadership Training for new, prospective and present leaders of OHCE is scheduled for Thursday, October 1, 2009 at the Clarion Convention Center, on Meridian and I40 in Oklahoma City, with registration beginning at 9:00. Cost will be $15 per person, which includes lunch at the Clarion.

Each county is encouraged to send their county president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and FCE educator. We also encourage you to include up to five other county members, as potential leaders, for a total of 10 attendees. Keynote speaker will be Julie Peter, former Toastmaster International District 16 Governor. She and her husband, Steve, co-authored a book on leadership in the volunteer organization. The title of her talk will be: “If You Are Going to Lead, Lead!”

Overnight arrangements may be made by each county. The Clarion Hotel will have a block of rooms reserved for OHCE, at a special rate, up until two weeks prior to the meeting.

2009 HCE Superintendents
Food Preservation-Doris Brehm, Kim Ritcher
Culinary-Peg Kunneman, Irene Garrett, Dena Hart
Clothing & Home Décor-Jan Wittrock, Debbie Winters, Vicki Wittrock
Home Management-Cody Brinchmeyer, Nancy Streigl, Ina Smith

2009 Open Class Division Superintendents
Homemaking-Theresa Wilczek, Eva Ryan, Toddie Rollins, Kim Kochenhower
Photography-Tammy Matthews, Cindy Wilczek
Clothing-Rosemary Winters
Art-Bethel Hackett, Sue Miller
Culinary-Cheryl Bullis, Linda Wilcox
Canned Products-Irene George, Loretta Kretchmar
Floriculture-Carolyn Flood
Wine-Carrie Russell

It has been my pleasure to be your FCS Educator for the last five years. It has been a very rewarding experience and I have many fond memories. I cherish the friendships I’ve made and am in awe of the role models I have seen. I will be retiring at the end of August. I feel it necessary to make myself more available to my family. Being grandma is very exciting and I do not want to miss out! I do plan to stay in touch and be a part of OHCE. Please continue to promote OHCE. The goals and values it stands for is what everyone should strive for.

Sincerely,

Paula Post, Extension Educator/ FCS/4-H Youth Dev.