

July 2010

Special points of interest:

- **Missouri ranked 5th highest in the U.S. For adult smoking prevalence.**
- **About half of students that smoke wanted to quit and more than half had tried to quit in the past year.**
- **Missouri's cigarette tax is the lowest in the country.**

Inside this issue:

Department of Health and Human Services launches new website	2
Cooper County Healthy Lifestyle Initiative	3
On-site Sewage System Operation & Maintenance	3
Onsite Sewage System class information	3

Public Health News



Missouri Youth Tobacco Survey

The Missouri Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS) 2003-2009 recommends the following strategies be implemented to reduce tobacco use among youth: **No smoking**

- **Promote quitting by adult and youth tobacco users—**....almost twice as many middle and high school students that currently smoke live with someone that smokes than do students that have never smoked. At 23.1 percent, Missouri's adult smoking prevalence was the fifth highest among all states in 2009. An important strategy for reducing youth smoking in Missouri is to reduce smoking among adults.
- **Increase health care provider counseling and affordable cessation service—**....The 2009 YTS found a significant decrease from 2007 in the percent of high school students that were asked by a doctor or other health professional if they smoked cigarettes. Additionally, only 15 percent or less of students that smoked had participated in a program to help them quit. However, about half of students that smoke wanted to quit and more than half had tried to quit in the past year. Health care provider counseling and cessation assistance should be made available for young people that want to quit, as well as for adults.
- **Increase the price of tobacco products—** At 17 cents per pack, Missouri's state tax on cigarettes is lowest in the country and well below the national average of \$1.42. The YTS showed the most utilized method of obtaining cigarettes by high school students that smoke was to give money to someone else to buy them. Evidence from states that have raised the tax on cigarettes clearly shows it to be an effective strategy for reducing smoking among both young people and adults because of the increase in price.
- **Create tobacco-free environments—**Each year about half of high school students and more than 40 percent of middle school students that had never smoked were exposed to secondhand smoke in the past seven days. Additionally, about a quarter of high school students work in places that allow smoking. Smoke-free work place laws not only reduce exposure to secondhand smoke, but have also been linked to reduced youth smoking initiation. The YTS found that the overwhelming majority of middle and high school students think secondhand smoke is harmful and should not be allowed in homes, vehicles and work places. Programs should be expanded that involve youth advocating for tobacco-free communities....
- **Decrease social acceptability of tobacco—**....Anti-smoking advertising, in combination with other interventions has been shown to reduce tobacco use among youth and should be increased to counter tobacco industry advertising.



[HealthCare.gov](#) - helpful information about health-care insurance options.

Public Health News



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HHS Launches New Consumer Focused Health Care Website

The Department of Health and Human Services unveiled an innovative new on-line tool that will help consumers take control of their health care by connecting them to new information and resources that will help them to access quality, affordable health care coverage. Called for by the Affordable Care Act, [HealthCare.gov](#) is the first website to provide consumers with both public and private health coverage options tailored specifically for their needs in a single, easy-to-use tool.

“[HealthCare.gov](#) helps consumers take control of their health care and make the choices that are right for them, by putting the power of information at their fingertips,” said HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. “For too long, the insurance market has been confusing and hard to navigate. [HealthCare.gov](#) makes it easy for consumers and small businesses to compare health insurance plans in both the public and the private sector and find other important health care information.”

[HealthCare.gov](#) is the first central database of health coverage options, combining information about public programs, from Medicare to new Pre-Existing Conditions Insurance Plan, with information from more than 1,000 private insurance plans. Consumers can receive information about options specific to their life situation and local community.

In addition, the website will be a one-stop-shop for information about the implementation of the Affordable Care Act as well as other health care resources. The website will connect consumers to quality rankings for local health care providers as well as preventive services.

“This website is unlike any government website you have ever seen or used before,” said HHS Chief Technology Officer Todd Park. “It was developed with significant consumer input and is remarkably easy to navigate. This is despite the sheer volume of content it offers consumers: billions of health care choices through the insurance finder and more than 500 pages of new content, all of which is designed to grow with ongoing consumer feedback and as our health care system improves.”

As the health care market transforms, so will [HealthCare.gov](#). In October, 2010, price estimates for health insurance plans will be available online. In the weeks and months ahead, new information on preventing disease and illness and improving the quality of health care for all Americans will also be posted. The website also includes a series of opportunities where users can indicate whether pages were helpful to them and we will continue to seek user feedback to grow and strengthen the site.

“People need to see what choices are offered, what options cost, and how coverage works in practice.” said Karen Pollitz, Deputy Director for Consumer Support, Office of Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight. “Today [HealthCare.gov](#) takes an important first step in that direction. In the coming months and years, we will add pricing and plan performance information so that consumers can see and understand and make meaningful choices about their health coverage.”

Cooper County Healthy Lifestyles Initiative (CHeLI)

The Cooper County Healthy Lifestyles (CHeLI) group meets from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. the second Wednesday of each month at the Cooper County Health Department meeting room. The campus URL for the statewide program is: <http://extension.missouri.edu/healthylife/>.

What is the Healthy Lifestyle Initiative?

It began in 2008 when University of Missouri Extension Healthy Lifestyle Initiative (HLI) supported four pilot communities to develop and implement community action plans focused on increasing the availability of healthy, affordable, locally produced food and safe accessible physical activity. During this time, each community engaged a broad spectrum of community members and stakeholders to draft and carry out plans that focus on policy and environmental changes to support healthy lifestyles within their community.

For years, health agencies, organizations, and institutions have worked to improve the health of individuals and communities by delivering programs that focus on changing peoples' behaviors. While these programs have had positive short-term results, they haven't been able to fully address increasing rates of obesity and related chronic diseases. There is a growing movement to move beyond programs and develop comprehensive, sustainable approaches to address preventable health issues. They are bringing the entire community together to talk, share resources and begin planning community-wide health initiatives. They are also focusing their efforts on finding ways to change the policies and environments that influence peoples' day-to-day activities.

Cooper County received a \$4000 University of Missouri grant to support the Cooper County Healthy Lifestyles Initiative. Initial leadership for this effort came from the Boonslick Heartland YMCA and Cooper County University Extension. The first meeting was held March 10, 2010.

Membership is open to all individuals and organizations committed to being active participants in this process. The first 18 months will be spend developing a data base on local programs and views (possibly including a survey) before initiating local programs.

On-Site Sewage System Operation and Maintenance

The Cooper County Public Health Center will be hosting a program that provides septic system owners with best management practices to keep their septic systems functioning properly. These practices are really about recycling water: cleaning wastewater and returning safe water to the water cycle. If a septic system is not functioning properly, clean water is not returned to our groundwater systems. The goal is to ensure that you can treat your wastewater while protecting human and environmental health in a cost-effective manner. Join us to:

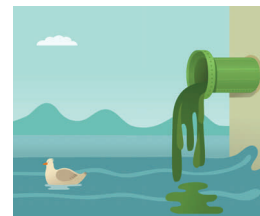
- Find out why it is important to have a properly operating system
- Have a basic understanding of the workings of your septic system
- Understand how to care for and protect your investment

See the last article of page four for the date, time and location of the class.



Help us to find ways to address our increasing obesity rate and related chronic diseases.

“CHeLI focuses their efforts on finding ways to change the policies and environments that influence peoples' day to day activities.”



Protect our ground water. Make sure your system is functioning properly.



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HEALTH CENTER**

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Properly maintaining your wastewater system helps to protect the environment and prevent disease.

Public Health - Prevent...Promote...Protect

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Sue's Corner—Onsite Wastewater System Maintenance

The Cooper County Public Health Center will be hosting a public education session for homeowners and realtors.

Topic: Onsite Wastewater System Maintenance

When: Friday, August 13th

Time: Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Where: Cooper County Public Health Center Basement Conference Room
17040 Klinton Drive, Boonville
(Take Hwy 87 South. Turn Right on Klinton Dr. and go one block.)

Cost: Free of Charge

The purpose of the session is to provide information for homeowners and realtors to understand basic maintenance needs for onsite wastewater treatment systems. This includes lagoons and septic systems.

The speaker will be Kent Shannon, Natural Resource Engineering Specialist, from the University of Missouri Extensions Center.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Melanie Hein, by August 11th, at 660-882-2626.