

Hoke County Newsletter

Welcome to the Hoke County Newsletter. Inside you'll find information of what's going on inside Hoke County.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please email

Newsletter @hokecounty.org



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2012 Candidate Filings

Several Candidates filed for elective offices during the February filing period. Some will be in the May Primary, and others who were unopposed will appear on the November General Election ballot. Those who filed for local offices are:

NC State Senate District 21

(Democrats)

Robert B. Clark III
Allen M. Thomas, Jr.

County Commissioner

(Democrats)

Lonnie Baldwin
James A. Leach
Freddie McPhaul
Robert A. Wright

County Commissioner

(Republicans)

John F. Harry
Elda M. Thacker

District Attorney, 16-A

(Democrat)

Kristy M. Newton
(unopposed)

Register of Deeds

(Democrat)

Onnie B. Dudley
(Unopposed)

PRIMARY ELECTION DATES:

Primary Election
Tuesday, May 8th, 2012

Second Primary
Tuesday, June 26, 2012

ONE-STOP VOTING:

Absentee one-stop voting will be held at the Board of Elections office from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm Monday thru Friday, April 19th thru May 4th; and Sunday, April 29th, from 2:00 until 6:00 pm; and Saturday, May 5th from 8:00 am until 1:00 pm.

Also, at the Matthew Rouse Center at 373 Pittman Grove Church Road from 2:00 pm until 8:00 pm Monday thru Friday, April 19th thru May 4th, and Saturday, May 5th from 8:00 am until 1:00 pm.



Tax Collection News

Last day to pay 2011 taxes to avoid advertisement is March 30, 2012. The advertisement list will appear in the April 11th addition of the News Journal. Garnishment and debt setoff process are operating in full compliance, however to avoid

these processes be sure to visit the tax collection office. The tax office is working on bring tax payment information at your fingertips. Watch for future details of the ability to pay your taxes from your home at your convenience.

Hoke County Tax Collector
PO Box 217
Raeford NC 28376
(910) 875-8751



Parks & Recreation Basketball



Hoke County Parks and Recreation Basketball winter season began in the middle of January and concluded the beginning of March. Our leagues consisted of the following: Novice League (ages 5-6) a total of 6 teams, Jr Pee Wee League (ages 7-8) a total of 8 teams, Pee Wee League (ages 9-10) a total of

8 teams, Midget League (ages 11-12) a total of 8 teams, Jr League (ages 13-15) a total of 4 teams. On March 5, 2012 the Pee Wee, Midget, and Jr League champions participated in the Hoke County/Hope Mills Basketball Challenge which was held in Hope Mills. The Knicks coached by Chris

Monroe represented the Pee Wee Division, the Bulldogs coached by Justin Pratt represented the Midget Division and the Knicks coached by Curtis Walker represented the Jr Division. We would like to thank all the participants and parents for a safe and fantastic year.

Parks & Recreation: Upcoming Events

Hoke County Parks & Recreation presents: Senior Citizens (55-up) Mother's Day Luncheon to be Saturday, May 12, 2012 from 12:00pm-2:00pm in the L E McLaughlin (senior room) 423 E. Central Avenue, Raeford. To register, call 875-4035.

Hoke County Parks & Recreation presents: Mackinac Island trip August 18-26, 2012. **The first deposit of \$75.00 per**

person is due April 6, 2012. The cost of the trip is \$739.00 per person double occupancy. For more information contact 875-4035.

Hoke County Parks & Recreation presents: Niagara Falls & Toronto trip September 30-October 6, 2012. **The first deposit of \$75.00 per person is due May 18, 2012.** The cost of the trip is \$565.00 per person

double occupancy. For more information call 875-4035.

Effective February 1, 2012, Hoke County Parks and Recreation's Line Dance Classes will be as follows: Every Tuesday from 6:00-8:00pm will be "Line Dance Class only". - Every Thursday from 6:00pm-8:00pm will be "Swing and Shag Class only". These classes will be in the LE McLaughlin

(senior room) with Edward Bradley as the Instructor. The cost will be \$3.00 per person each night. Call 875-4035 for more information.

If know someone ages 55 and up interested in the Lumber River Regional Seniors Games held each April in Lumberton NC please contact Pat Graham @ 878-1255.



A group of Hoke County senior citizens enjoyed a great trip to Mt. Rushmore/South Dakota.



A group of Hoke County senior citizens enjoyed a great trip to Mt. Rushmore/South Dakota.

News from the Tax Assessor's Office

Elderly, Disability and Disabled Veteran Exclusions

There is still time to apply for exclusions for the 2012 tax year. Applications will be accepted until June 1, 2012.

Elderly or Disabled Homestead Exclusion Program 2012

The Elderly or Disabled Homestead Exclusion excludes \$25,000 or 50% of the value of the house and land (up to one acre) whichever is greater.

Ownership Requirements:

1. Owner must be 65 years of age or totally and permanently disabled
2. Owner must be a North Carolina resident
3. Owner's previous year income cannot exceed \$27,100 for the 2012 exclusion
4. Exclusion is for your permanent legal residence only

Application Requirements:

1. Owner must apply for the exemption one-time.
2. Owner must provide proof of Income
3. Totally and permanently disabled persons must complete a certification of Disability and have it signed by their physician.
4. Applications are to be filed between January 1 – June 1, 2012

DISABLED VETERAN EXCLUSION 2012

1. What is the exclusion?

A permanent residence owned and occupied by an owner who is a North Carolina resident and who is an honorably discharged disabled Veteran or the unmarried surviving spouse of an honorably discharged disabled veteran or veteran who died as a result of a service-connected condition receives a reduction in value of \$45,000.



DISABLED VETERAN EXCLUSION 2012

(...continued)

2. Is there an age or income requirement?

No

3. Is there an application?

Yes. A one-time application is required. Applications may be filed between January 1 and June 1, 2012.

4. What are the requirements?

- a. Veteran, as of January 1, has a 100% permanent and total disability that is service-connected, **or** receives benefits for specially adapted housing under 38 U.S.C. 2101
- b. The total and permanent service-connected disability must be proven with a veteran's disability certification from VA. This must be the certificate of disability form AV-9A and it must be signed by the Regional office of Veteran Affairs.
- c. For those applying under the special adapted housing benefit, a letter must be submitted from VA stating the 100% service-connected disability and they have received benefits under the specially adapted housing program Title 38, Chapter 12 United States Code.
- d. Unmarried surviving spouse must also have the Form AV-9A completed by the Regional office of Veteran Affairs.

Applications may be obtained at the Hoke County Tax Office or from the County webpage: www.hokecounty.net, Tax office, Tax forms.

Additional information may be obtained by calling the Tax Listing office at 910-875-8751.

Hoke County Public Library

CLOSINGS @ THE LIBRARY

Hoke County Public Library will be closed **Friday, April 6 through Sunday, April 8, 2012** for the Easter holiday. Videos checked out on Thursday, April 5 will be due on Monday, April 9.

Hoke County Public Library will be closed **Saturday, May 26 through Monday, May 28, 2012** for the Memorial Day holiday. Videos checked out on Friday, May 25 will be due on Tuesday, May 29.

MEETINGS @ THE LIBRARY

Friends of the Library
Monday, March 26, 2012 -- 6:30 pm

HCPL Board meeting
Wednesday, April 11, 2012 -- 4:00 pm

UPCOMING PROGRAMS @ THE LIBRARY

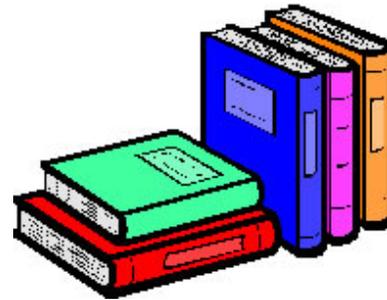
Tail Waggin' Tutors

Saturday, March 17, 2012, 2:00-4:00
Saturday, April 28, 2012, 2:00-4:00

Is your child a reluctant reader, or just a dog lover
Therapy Dogs International certified therapy dogs will be at the library to offer children a chance to read aloud for tail wags & doggy kisses!

Pet Week

Monday, April 23 through Saturday, April 28, 2012
Pet Food For Fines Week -- "pay" your overdue fines with a donation of dog or cat food, to benefit local shelters



Schedule of Events TBA
Contact Jessica @ jwatkins@hokecounty.org or 875-2502 for more information

Civil War Photo Exhibit -- "Freedom, Sacrifice, Memory"

Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War in North Carolina www.nccivilwar150.com
Tuesday, May 1 through Friday, May 11, 2012

Summer Reading Program -- Dream big...READ!

Programs for ages 0-4, 5-12 and 13-17

June 1-August 24, 2012 (reading for prizes)
June 12-August 16, 2012 (programs)

Schedule of Events TBA
Contact Jessica @ jwatkins@hokecounty.org or Lynette @ lynette.dial@srls.info, or call 875-2502 for more information

RECURRING EVENTS @ THE LIBRARY

Homework Central

Free Homework Help for Grades K-12
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 3:30-5:30 pm

Preschool Storytime

For Ages 3-5
Tuesdays @ 10:00 am for ages 3-5

Computer Classes for Beginners

Tuesdays, 5:00-6:00 pm
Thursdays, 10:00-11:00 am
Saturdays, 10:00-11:00 am

Pre-registration required. Call 875-2502



Department of Social Services

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

In 2011, Hoke County DSS was one of eight pilot counties in the state for REAP (Reaching for Excellence and Accountability in Practice); the pilot officially ended in December 2011 however we will continue to strive for better child welfare outcomes for the children and families in Hoke County. We are making efforts to track and analyze data to identify trends and gaps in services and to ultimately improve our child welfare system by implementing improved and/or new services. We developed a Child Welfare Achievement Plan and review it

quarterly with our community partners. Our next REAP community meeting is on 4/19/12 from 9 am to 10:30 at the Hoke County Public Library. We will review our achievement plan, identify progress that has been made, and look for new ways to improve services. Child welfare affects the entire community and it will take a community approach to improve child welfare outcomes. If you are interested in participating in the meeting, please contact Kristi Pigford at 878-4048 or via e-mail at kpigford@hokecounty.org.

As a result of our participation in the REAP pilot,

Hoke County has been selected to take part in a new federally funded grant project called Project Broadcast. Hoke County and the other 7 REAP pilot counties, along with Buncombe County are the counties identified to participate in this grant project. The North Carolina Division of Social Services was awarded the 5-year grant from the Children's Bureau. The information regarding the grant is forthcoming however one of the main purposes of the grant project is to have a trauma-informed work force for children in foster care. The project will provide specialized training to child welfare staff, mental

health providers, law enforcement, juvenile justice staff, and the school system beginning in October 2012, with social services and mental health agencies being the priority.

A 16-hour trauma-informed parenting workshop will also be provided to foster parents/adoptive parents/kinship providers. We are hopeful that this project will have a positive impact on the overall well-being of our foster children and ultimately improve child welfare outcomes for our children in foster care in Hoke County.



TRAINING CLASSES

Hoke DSS offers a foster/adoptive parent training class at least once annually. The 30-hour class is required for anyone interested in fostering or adopting a child from foster care. The class is free of charge and is normally

held on Saturdays for five weeks.

We are currently offering the class beginning March 3, 2012 and ending March 31, 2012. For further information on fostering or adopting a child in foster care, please contact Ana

Watson at 878-1989 or via e-mail at awatson@hokecounty.org or April Locklear at 878-1927 or via e-mail at alocklear@hokecounty.org.

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. If you are interested in learning more about child abuse prevention or any other child welfare matter, we can provide training and information to your

community group, church group, school, business, etc. Child Welfare affects the entire community; we are ready and available to share information to increase awareness to protect the children in our community. For further information, please contact Terry Stanton at 878-1929 or via e-mail at tstanton@hokecounty.org or Kristi Pigford at 878-4018 or via e-mail at kpigford@hokecounty.org.

Hoke County Cooperative Extension



Hoke County 4-H Talent Showcase

Left to Right (front) J. Allen, K. Dwyer, K. Dockery, A. Stubbs, B. Winston, (back) A. Clark, L. Allen, Back Row, C. Brown, J. Howland, J. Howland and J. Howland

TALENT SHOWCASE

Hoke County 4-H held its 2012 Talent Showcase, Saturday, March 3, at the Carolina Civic Center, in Lumberton, NC, along with Robeson, Bladen, and Cumberland counties. Over 45 youth from all 4 counties competed within each of their age groups.

Representing Hoke County were Jack and Layla Allen, Aaron Clark,

Kayley Dwyer, Brianna Winston, Kayla Dockery, April Stubbs, Jenna Howland, Jake Howland and Jesse Howland. In the 9-10 age category, Kayley Dwyer placed third with her piano number. In the 11-13 age category, Brianna, Kayla and April placed third with their "Praise" dance.

The Artistic Showcase was held during this same time with over 30 pieces submitted for

judging. Emily Loes, Kayley Dwyer, Alora Edwards and Lianna Edwards submitted items to be judged. All of the items were judged before the Talent Showcase and were on display at the Civic Center. Kayley Dwyer took home a first place ribbon for her painting called "Rainbow of Hands." We are very proud of all youth who submitted entries or performed their talent.

VOLUNTEER NIGHT

Hoke County 4-H held its 2012 4-H Youth and Volunteer Celebration Night on Monday, March 5 at the L.E. McLaughlin, Jr. Building with about 90 participants. Awards and medals were presented for youth accomplishments for 2011 and certificates of appreciation were presented to volunteers that served throughout 2011.

Photo (right):

4-H Youth and Volunteer Celebration Night

Left to right, B. Winston, A. Clark, A. Daniels, C. Brown, S. Daniels, C. Soles and T. Wood



Hoke County Cooperative Extension

CALENDAR OF EVENTS MARCH - MAY 2012

March 26, Private Applicator Pesticide Training I, 9 - 11 am, Hoke County Extension Center

March 30, Women's Health Symposium and Luncheon, 12 - 1 pm, \$6 per person and pre-registration is required, Raeford Civic Center

April 4 - May 3, Parenting Matters, each Wednesday, 11 - 12:30 pm, Hoke County Extension Center

April 10, Private Applicator Pesticide Training II, 3 - 5 pm, Hoke County Extension Center

April 21, 4-H Life Skills Workshop, 10 am - 2 pm,

parents and students grades 3 - 6 in the Life Skills Program, Hoke County Extension Center

May 2, Community Supported Agriculture, \$70 for fresh fruits and vegetables for a 5-week subscription or you can add beef for \$130, pick-up weekly bag of locally grown products on Wednesdays from 5 - 6 pm, Hoke County Extension Center

May 5, Raeford Farmers Market, 9 am - 1 pm, open each Saturday through

October, Main Street beside the Courthouse in Raeford

May 8, Rockfish Farmers Market, 2 - 6 pm, open each Tuesday through October, Rockfish Community Center, Lindsay Road in Rockfish

May 12, 4-H Favorite Food Show, 9 am - 12 pm, youth ages 5 -18 will compete in breads, main entrees and desserts with a meal plan including their food item prepared and served for judging.



Animal Control & Shelter News

We are proud to announce that Officer Ralph Cecil has been promoted to Animal Control Director. Please join us in Congratulating Officer Cecil on his promotion and wishing him continued success in the Animal Control Department.

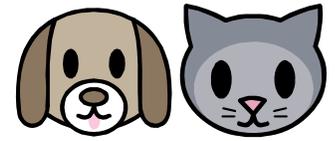
In other news the Hoke County Animal Control/Shelter will be holding a Rabies Clinic on March 31st at the Paraclete Building on Hwy 401. Rabies vaccinations will be given

to dogs/cats 4 months of age and older. The cost will be \$6.00 per rabies vaccination. Each vaccination will be good for (one) 1 year unless the animal has a current rabies vaccination and the owner can provide a vaccination certificate.

In addition to rabies vaccinations the shelter also provides rabies vaccinations to the public on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1:30 pm-3:30 pm. Microchips are given

Monday-Friday at the shelter during normal business hours for a \$20.00 fee.

Each year thousands of lost and abandoned animals are taken in by shelters and humane societies across the United States. Some of these animals never make it home because they can't be identified. Microchips are the only truly permanent method of identifying your dog and it lasts for the lifetime of the pet. Bring your pet for a microchip today!



Adoptions The shelter has many adoptable pets that desperately need to find a forever home. The adoption fee for cats is \$60.00 and a dog adoption is \$90.00. Both adoptions cover spay/neuter rabies vaccination, and a microchip. Our adoption rates are on the rise so please help us continue to increase our adoptions by telling friends and loved ones to visit the shelter today!

Announcements and Notices

COMMUNICATIONS

We will be constructing a new Emergency Communications Center behind the Health Department. The Board of Commissioners awarded the construction contract to Chavis, Inc. We expect completion around September or October, 2012.



LICENSE PLATE AGENCY

Starting at the end of April, the LPA office will be closing for lunch from 1:00-2:00. This will continue through the end of June.

HOKE READING/LITERACY COUCIL

Serving the citizens of Hoke County with Reading, Writing, Introduction to Technology, Tutoring, and

ESL classes.

We offer tutoring (one-to-one and small group) to Hoke County Schools' students.

Public Access Computer Lab Hours of Operation

Mon & Wed 5pm to 8pm
Sat 9am to 1pm

Contact 910-875-2145 or hrlc@nc.rr.com with any questions

SOLID WASTE

The last few months have eliminated some familiar faces. We bid farewell to Harris Williams, an attendant at Scurlock Convenience Site, and to Robert Walters, who worked at the Transfer Station. We wish them a prosperous and well-deserved retirement.

Join us in making welcome Tony Locklear and Timmie Hunt, who replaced them as members of the workteam at Hoke Solid Waste.

Sheriff Hubert A. Peterkin | 8th Annual Golf Tournament

WHERE:

Bayonet Golf Course

WHEN:

Friday, May 11, 2012
(Deadline May 4, 2012)

TIME:

1:00PM Shotgun Start
Please sign in by 12noon

FORMAT:

4 Man Captains Choice
Bring your own team, or sign up as an individual

ENTRY FEES:

Each player \$60.00. This includes cart, green fees, door prizes, beverages, meal, and free range balls.

POINT OF CONTACT:

Chief Deputy G. Hammond
624-2199



**CLOSEST TO THE PIN,
LONGEST DRIVE AND
DOOR PRIZES**

Tips from the Building Inspections Office

I know everyone is getting spring fever and with the warm weather we are having, spring must be right around the corner. It is time to start thinking about things that you as homeowners and tenants can do to save money on electricity and to be safe.

The most abused appliance in your house is your refrigerator. As long as it keeps everything cool you do not think about it but it may be costing you extra dollars on your electric bill. Here are a couple of tips. Check the gasket seal that is on the door to see if it is sealing well. A leaking door gasket can cause the refrigerator to run more than it should. If you have condensation anywhere along the outside edge of the door the seal is leaking. Most of the time you can clean the door seal with a mixture of bleach and water or any kitchen cleaner. By cleaning the door gasket it will seal better. In some cases it may need to be replaced. Another tip is to check the condensing coils. They are located under the refrigerator or sometimes on the back of the unit. On most models you can check the

coils by removing the grill that is located at the bottom front of the refrigerator. Most of the time you can pull off the grill with ease. They are normally snapped in place and do not require any tools to remove. Get a flashlight and look under the refrigerator and see if the coils are free of dirt and dust. Many times you will find a large build up of dust. Use your vacuum cleaner and clean the dust and dirt off the coils. If you can get to the back of your refrigerator clean the slotted opening where the condensing fan is located, it will be full of dust also. By following these simple tips it will save you money in electricity, keep all your food cold and may prevent premature failure of the refrigerator.

The next tip is to be sure you keep the Heating and A/C filter clean. In most households it should be changed once every one to two months. Go outside and look at the outside unit. Be sure there are no bushes touching the unit or any other kind of restrictions. Check the coils to see that there is no grass or



other things that may have stopped up the coils. The coils on the outside unit are like the radiator of a car, if they are clogged and dirty it causes the unit to overheat which causes the unit not to run properly and therefore uses more electricity. It is a very good idea to have your HVAC unit serviced once a year to keep it running at peak performance. If you do not have it serviced by a HVAC contractor at least cut the unit off and clean the coils yourself. It is simple to do. First take a household cleaner such as Purple Cleaner or 409 and spray the coils. Be sure not to use a cleaner that has ammonia in it. Ammonia can cause damage to the aluminum coils. Start at the top of the coils and continue spray cleaner on the coils until you get to the bottom. Let the cleaner sit and soak for five minutes and then take your water hose and spray the coils. Be sure to use a nozzle that will spray a stream of water. Start at the top and spray the coils with water until you have reached the bottom. This will clean the grass and dust that the fan has sucked into the coils. By

cleaning the HVAC unit it will help reduce your electric bill and keep your house more comfortable.

The last thing is a couple of safety tips. Be sure to check the smoke detectors in your house. Push the test button to see if they are working and be sure to replace the batteries in all the units.. Be sure to talk to your kids and make a safety plan on what to do if the smoke detectors go off during the night. Be sure they understand this plan and they know what to do and where to go if there is a fire. Also talk to them about where and what to do if there is a severe storm. It only takes a few minutes of planning to keep your family more secure and safe. You can go online and find a safety plan for your family. I hope these tips will help you save a little money and also keep your family safe. The staff of the Inspections Department would like to wish everyone a safe and enjoyable spring.





April 7, 2012 1PM
Hoke County Parks and Recreation Park on Hwy 211.

Easter Egg Hunt, games, raffles, prizes and the Easter Bunny! All Kids under the ages of 10, will be admitted into the Egg Hunt with a \$5.00 donation.

Please bring your own baskets!!

All proceeds benefit Hoke County Relay for Life



Contact: Kim Gentry: 818-1832 or Ashley Dial:964-3617

We Will Be Celebrating The
GRAND RE-OPENING OF THE
Hoke Co. Health Department!



Day Celebration: 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

Come Join The Celebration...

The Community Is Invited!

Friday, March 30, 2012

WHERE: The Hoke Co. Health Department

ADDRESS: 683 East Palmer Road,

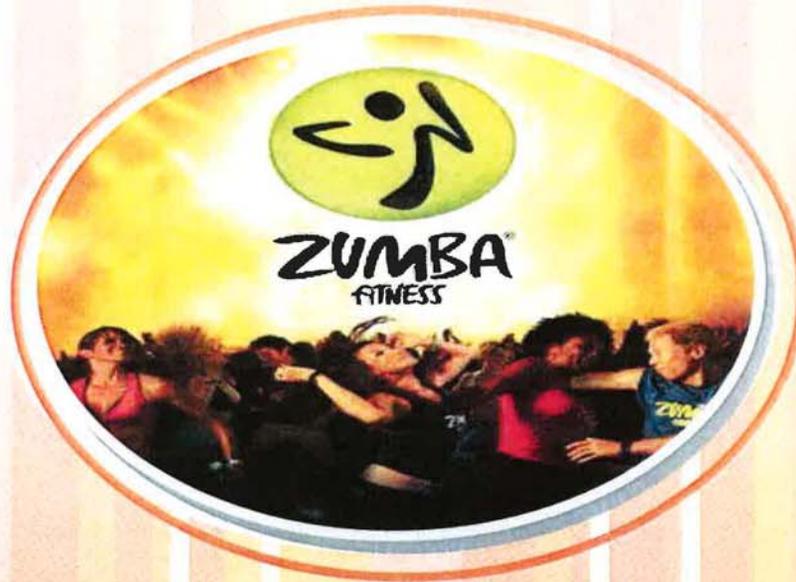
Raeford, NC 28376

Come Meet Your New
Health Director & Her Staff;
Learn About Available Health
Services & More!
For More Information Call
Cornelia@
(910) 875-3717 ext.2104

Hoke Co. Health Department
"We're Committed To Caring!"



A reception will follow!



Classes Are Every Tuesday Starting
March 6th—March 27th From 5:30-6:30PM

A \$5.00 Instructor Fee Is Required

To Participate...

For more information or to pre-register
contact Cornelia 910-875-3717 ext. 2104

From the Hoke County IT Department

The popularity of social networking sites -- such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter and others -- has expanded tremendously in recent years, with nearly two-thirds of Americans using these sites regularly.¹ The number of adult Internet users having a social networking profile has more than quadrupled in the past five years, according to the Pew Internet & American Life Project. The sites are becoming more ubiquitous for both personal and professional activities. The sites also continue to serve as prime targets for malware distribution and scams. A recent study reported that 91% of respondents have received spam and 54% were targets of phishing attacks on social networking sites.² While there has been increased attention to addressing security concerns relating to social networking sites, you need to remain vigilant and take necessary precautions when using them.

What are the security concerns of social networking sites?

Social networking sites continue to grow in popularity as attack vectors because of the volume of users and the amount of personal information that is posted. The nature of social networking sites encourages you to post personal information. The perceived anonymity and false sense of security of the Internet may cause users to provide more information about themselves and their life online than they would to a stranger in person.

The information you post online could be used by those with malicious intent to conduct social engineering scams and attempt to steal your identity for access to your financial data. For example, many individuals are tempted to click on a video they see on a friend's page. Unfortunately, these videos may lead to a malicious website. When you access a site that has malicious code, your machine could become infected.

What can I do to be safe?

- **Keep your system updated:** Ensure that any computer you use to connect to a social networking site has proper security measures in place, including anti-virus and anti-spyware software, and a firewall. Make sure you keep them up-to-date. Keep your operating system updated and patched. Set the configuration to "auto update" so patches can be applied automatically without intervention.
- **Use strong passwords:** Protect your social networking account with a strong password. Do not share this password with anyone or use it for other sites. In addition, some social networking sites support features for stronger authentication, such as using one-time passwords when logging in from public computers or using your phone as part of the login process. Enable these features where possible. ***It is critical that passwords used on social networking sites not be used on other sites.***
- **Links:** Be cautious when clicking on links. If a link seems odd, suspicious, or too good to be true, do not click on it...even if the link is on your most trusted friend's page. Your friend's account may have been hijacked or infected and now be spreading malware.

¹ <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2011/Social-Networking-Sites/report.aspx>

² http://www.barracudanetworks.com/ns/news_and_events/index.php?nid=492

- **Scams:** Criminals take advantage of the open nature of social networking sites to defraud individuals. Such scams sometimes use the pretext of an offer for a job or money. Another common scam uses hijacked accounts to contact the victim's friends with requests for help, claiming that the person was robbed in foreign country and needs money. Be cautious when contacted on a social networking site with a request for money or with an offer that's surprisingly good.
- **Privacy:** Do not assume privacy on social networking sites. For both business and personal use, confidential information should not be shared. *You should only post information you are comfortable disclosing to a complete stranger.* Review a site's privacy policy. Some sites may share information such as email addresses or user preferences with other parties. If a site's privacy policy is vague or does not properly protect your information, do not use the site.
- **Personal Information:** Do not respond to an email requesting personal information or that ask you to "verify your information" or to "confirm your user id and password."
- **Be cautious about installing applications:** Some social networking sites provide the ability to add or install third party applications, such as games. Keep in mind there is little or no quality control or review of these applications and they may have full access to your account and the data you share. Malicious applications can use this access to interact with your friends on your behalf and to steal and misuse personal data. Only install applications that come from trusted, well-known sites. If you are no longer using the app, remove it. Also, please note that installing some applications may modify your security and privacy settings.

Resources for more information:

MS-ISAC Newsletter – Security and Privacy on Social Networking Sites

<http://msisac.cisecurity.org/newsletters/2010-03.cfm>

US-CERT Cyber Security Tip – Staying Safe on Social Networking Sites

<http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST06-003.html>

National Cyber Security Alliance – Protect Yourself: Social Networking

<http://staysafeonline.org/in-the-home/social-networking>

What do you do in Severe Weather?



In recent weeks many communities in the US have been devastated by multiple tornadoes. Just ago year ago, April 14, 2011, Hoke County was spared from the devastation of a tornado, as one touched down just across the border in Cumberland County causing millions of dollars in damage to private and public property. The Hoke County Sheriff's/Emergency Management Office would like to take this opportunity to remind all employee's and citizens about the severe weather warning system and to make certain everyone in your family knows what to do when a tornado watch or warning sounds.

In a severe weather emergency, all employees should be aware of their responsibilities and the actions they should take to protect themselves and others.

- If severe weather is threatening, tune in to local radio or television stations or check local weather reports online.
- If a tornado warning is issued or the weather becomes severe, seek immediate cover in the company's pre-designated shelter area.
- If you are unable to reach the pre-designated shelter area, take cover in interior rooms with small or no windows such as restrooms, kitchens or hallways on the lowest possible floor.
- Climb under heavy furniture, such as tables and desks, if possible.
- Cover your face and head with blankets, coats, jackets, etc. to protect yourself from flying glass.
- Stay away from windows and doors and do not use the telephone.

Be prepared to take cover when the following alerts have been issued for our area:

- *Severe Thunderstorm Watch* - Severe thunderstorms are possible.
- *Tornado Watch* - Tornadoes are possible.
- *Severe Thunderstorm Warning* - Severe thunderstorms are occurring.

Take immediate cover when the following warning has been issued for our area:

- *Tornado Warning* - A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar

Tornado Home Protection



Even if you live outside "Tornado Alley," the area of the country that runs north from Texas through eastern Nebraska and northeast to Indiana, you are still vulnerable to tornadoes. Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas may see more of these unpredictable and dangerous storms than other states, but the rest of the country also gets its share of twisters. Follow these steps to protect your family and your home from disaster.

First things first

Structures built to meet or exceed current model building codes for high-wind regions have a much better chance of surviving violent windstorms. The Standard Building Code, issued by the Southern Building Code Congress International, Inc., is one source for guidance on fortifying your home against fierce winds. Although no home can withstand a direct hit from a severe tornado, solid construction will help your home survive if it's to the side of the tornado's path.

When inspecting your home, pay particular attention to the windows, doors, roof, gables and connections (roof-to-wall, wall-to-foundation). Residences in inland areas are typically not built to withstand high wind forces, and weaknesses in these elements of your home make it more vulnerable to significant damage.

If you're handy with a hammer and saw, you can do much of the work yourself. Work involving your home's structure may require a building contractor, however, or even a registered design professional such as an architect or engineer.

When working outside

- Replace gravel/rock landscaping material with shredded bark.
- Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed. Cut weak branches and trees that could fall on your house.

When building or remodeling

Windows: If you are replacing your existing windows, install impact-resistant window systems, which have a much better chance of surviving a major windstorm. These window systems are commonly available in hurricane-prone areas. If you are unable to find them locally, you can order them from manufacturers or home improvement stores in coastal areas.

Entry doors: Make certain your doors have at least three hinges and a dead-bolt security lock, with a bolt at least one inch long. Anchor door frames securely to wall framing.

Patio doors: Sliding glass doors are more vulnerable to wind damage than most other doors. If you are replacing your patio doors or building a new home, consider installing impact-resistant door systems made of laminated glass, plastic glazing or a combination of plastic and glass.

Garage doors: Because of their size and construction, garage doors are highly susceptible to wind damage. A qualified inspector can determine if both the door and the track system can resist high winds and, if necessary, replace them with a stronger system.

Garage doors more than 8 feet wide are most vulnerable. Install permanent wood or metal stiffeners. Or contact the door manufacturer's technical staff for recommendations about temporary center supports you can attach and remove easily when severe weather threatens.

Roofs: If you are replacing your roof, take steps to ensure that both the new roof covering and the sheathing will resist high winds. Your roofing contractor should:

- Remove old coverings down to the bare wood sheathing.
- Remove sheathing to confirm that rafters and trusses are securely connected to the walls.
- Replace damaged sheathing.
- Refasten existing sheathing according to the proper fastening schedule outlined in the current model building code for high-wind regions.
- Install a roof covering designed to resist high winds.

- Seal all roof sheathing joints with self-stick rubberized asphalt tape to provide a secondary moisture barrier.

If you want to give your roof sheathing added protection, but it's not time to re-roof, glue the sheathing to the rafters and the trusses. Use an adhesive that conforms to Performance Specification AFG-01 developed by APA -- The Engineered Wood Association, which you can find at any hardware store or home improvement center.

Gables: Brace the end wall of a gable roof properly to resist high winds. Check the current model building code for high-wind regions for appropriate guidance, or consult a qualified engineer or architect.

Connections: The points where the roof and the foundation meet the walls of your house are extremely important if your home is to resist high winds and the pressures they place on the entire structure.

- Anchor the roof to the walls with metal clips and straps (most easily added when you replace your roof).
- Make certain the walls are properly anchored to the foundation. A registered design professional can determine if these joints need retrofitting, and a qualified contractor can perform the work the design professional identifies.
- If your house has more than one story, make certain the upper story wall framing is firmly connected to the lower framing. The best time to do this is when you remodel.

When a tornado threatens

While no home can ever be made "tornado-proof," you can improve the odds of your home surviving high winds by taking these precautions. Take these additional steps to protect yourself and your family:

- Decide in advance where you will take shelter (a local community shelter, perhaps, or your own underground storm cellar or in-residence "safe" room). When a tornado approaches, go there immediately. If your home has no storm cellar or in-residence "safe" room and you have no time to get to a community shelter, head to the centermost part of your basement or home -- away from windows and preferably under something sturdy like a workbench or staircase. The more walls between you and the outside, the better.
- Become familiar with your community's severe weather warning system and make certain every adult and teenager in your family knows what to do when a tornado watch or warning sounds. Learn about your workplace's disaster safety plans and similar measures at your children's schools or day care centers.
- Study your community's disaster preparedness plans and create a family plan in case you are able to move to a community shelter. Identify escape routes from your home and neighborhood

and designate an emergency meeting place for your family to reunite if you become separated. Also establish a contact point to communicate with concerned relatives.

- Put together an emergency kit that includes a three-day supply of drinking water and food you don't have to refrigerate or cook; first aid supplies; a portable NOAA weather radio; a wrench and other basic tools; a flashlight; work gloves; emergency cooking equipment; portable lanterns; fresh batteries for each piece of equipment; clothing; blankets; baby items; prescription medications; extra car and house keys; extra eyeglasses; credit cards and cash; important documents, including insurance policies.
- Move anything in your yard that can become flying debris inside your house or garage before a storm strikes. Do this only if authorities have announced a tornado watch, however. If authorities have announced a tornado warning, leave it all alone.
- Don't open your windows. You won't save the house, as once thought, and you may actually make things worse by giving wind and rain a chance to get inside.
- Don't try to ride out a tornado in a manufactured home. Even manufactured homes with tie-downs overturn in these storms because they have light frames and offer winds a large surface area to push against. In addition, their exteriors are vulnerable to high winds and wind-borne debris.

Finally, review your homeowners insurance policy periodically with your insurance agent or company representative to make sure you have sufficient coverage to rebuild your life and home after a tornado. Report any property damage to your insurance agent or company representative immediately after a natural disaster and make temporary repairs to prevent further damage.

For information about filing an insurance claim after a natural disaster, contact your insurance agent or insurance company.

Tornado Storm Shelters

When a deadly tornado hits, moving into an interior room or closet of your home – as many guidelines recommend – might not offer enough protection. That's why some homeowners choose to build or buy a family storm shelter.

What kinds of storm shelters are there?

Three main types of shelters are designed to help protect you from severe weather. While each is intended to keep you and your family safe, each has its pros and cons.

Underground: A modern version of the old "storm cellars," these shelters are usually safe from flying debris and high winds. If you have to go outdoors (however briefly) to get inside, it can be difficult to access them if conditions outside are hazardous. Installation can be a problem, depending on the type of rock and the water table in your area.

In-residence: These act more like fortified closets, so they are more accessible when a tornado is imminent. They are usually built into a new house using reinforced concrete, reinforced masonry or wood/steel combinations. Building one into an existing house can be difficult and costly. Alternatives include pre-built metal shelters that are not only easier to install, but can be placed almost anywhere in the house.

Community: If a family shelter isn't an option, community shelters can hold multiple families (from as few as a dozen people to several hundred). Commonly used in manufactured housing areas, these shelters are usually above ground – which exposes them to flying debris – but many more lives can be saved.

What's the best storm shelter?

There's no one authority to tell you what the best storm shelter is, nor can the federal government endorse a specific type of storm shelter as being "the best." However, safety standards for storm shelters and shelter components have been established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to ensure that you will be protected in most tornadoes, while the National Storm Shelter Association has also established a shelter standard.

The Wind Science and Engineering Research Center at Texas Tech University performs tests on shelters and various shelter components to see if they meet both sets of guidelines. Researchers use high-powered air cannon to shoot wooden two-by-fours at shelter walls and doors to simulate flying debris, while another test uses a wind tunnel to simulate the high winds and stress that walls would encounter. These tests and guidelines can help you choose the shelter that can best protect your family when a real tornado hits.

FEMA guidelines

The following rules are only a few of the federal guidelines established by FEMA. More information, including building plans, materials and more is available either by calling 1-888-565-3896 and requesting publication FEMA 320 ("Taking Shelter from the Storm: Building a Safe Room Inside Your House").

High winds: Tested with a 3-second gust of 250 mph.

- Walls, doors and ceilings must be able to withstand the peak wind velocity without buckling or separating.

- The shelter cannot overturn or slide.

Debris: Tested with a 15 lb. two-by-four wooden board propelled at 100 mph (250 mph wind equivalent)

- The walls and ceiling of a shelter must resist penetration by a test object.

Other requirements:

- Shelters must have a protected ventilation system.
- Shelters should have at least one fire extinguisher, flashlights, a first-aid kit, 8 hours' supply of drinking water, and a NOAA weather radio.

Additional requirements for underground shelters:

- Shelters must be watertight and resist flotation due to saturated soil.
- Shelters must contain a transmitter of some sort to signal the location of the shelter to emergency personnel, should debris trap shelter occupants.



WHAT'S NEW?



PHARMACY IS CHANGING FROM MEDCO TO PRIME

WHAT IS PRIME?

Prime Therapeutics is a leader in the pharmacy benefit management (PBM) industry. Prime will administer pharmacy benefits for all Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC (BCBSNC) subscribers. They will replace Medco starting **April 1, 2012.**

WHAT'S CHANGING?

REPLACEMENT ID CARDS

Covered employees will receive **NEW ID** cards in **March 2012**. ID cards will be mailed to your HOME ADDRESS. *If your address needs to be updated, please contact your HR representative as soon as possible.*



Mail Order / Ordering New Prescriptions / Refills

Using www.MyPrimeMail.com members are able to set-up:

- Mail Order prescriptions,
- Order new prescriptions, or
- Request refills online (*Worry Free Refill program has been discontinued*).

Previous credit card information used on www.Medco.com will need to be updated on www.MyPrimeMail.com, after March 16, 2012, as this confidential financial information will not transfer.

WHAT'S NOT CHANGING?

- **Copayment:** Your copays will remain the same.
- **Prescription Coverage:** Your prescriptions tier coverage (generic, brand, specialty) will remain the same.
- **Prior Authorization:** Your current prior authorizations will remain in effect.
- **Specialty Pharmacy:** No change to network or coverage
- **Network:** The pharmacy network is virtually the same. Most employees will not need to switch pharmacies. If your pharmacy is not in the network, you will receive a letter from BCBSNC.