



Hello All!

The Newton County Extension staff are still here for the citizens of Newton County. Times are uncertain and circumstances are changing hourly. We want to take a moment to give you an update from our office and provide you research based information to keep you and your family safe!

Please note...All Extension events/meetings are cancelled until further notice. MSU is closely monitoring the situation and implementing a plan for what the next few weeks will look like for our office as we try to serve and aid the community.

Social distancing is very important. Please try to stay safe and healthy during this time by staying home if you're sick. Remember to cover coughs and sneezes into your elbow, and practice social distancing by avoiding hugs, handshakes and small crowds. Please add the Newton County Extension Office Facebook page for updated information and tips that we will post for your family needs.

You can reach a member of our staff immediately by phone at 601-635-7011, or if you have a non-time sensitive request or inquiry, you can email individual staff members (see gray sidebar to the right for emails.)

In order to best serve the clientele of Newton County during this time, the Extension office will remain open during normal hours, Monday-Friday, 8:00 - 5:00. However, in compliance with the MSU efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19, we ask that you contact our office by phone, mail or email, so that we can best provide your educational needs.

Sincerely,
The Extension Agents

Katrina McCalphie

Leanne Kilgore



Being Counted Matters

Mississippi needs your help. By participating in the U.S. Census, you can help our state get the representation and resources we need.



**STAND UP FOR MISSISSIPPI
AND BE COUNTED!**

Do you produce fruits, nuts, or vegetables commercially? Help MSU Extension help you! LET US KNOW WHAT YOU GROW AND HOW YOU GROW IT! Visit <http://msuext.ms/nwslt> for more information.



Ideas for Fun Family Bonding

- Indoor picnic
- Board games/card games
- Bake treats
- Try a new recipe
- Karaoke or Lip Sync Battle
- Just Dance Competition
- Puzzles
- Finger painting
- Play dough
- Arts & crafts
- Spa day - paint fingers/toes, facials
- Movie marathon
- Choreograph a dance
- Create a family bucket list
- Make an bury a time capsule
- Take a personality test & compare results
- Answer a questionnaire to learn more about each other
- Living room campout - build a fort and make s'mores
- Read a story book aloud
- Take pictures doing each of these and post them to encourage others

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HOME SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

Homes can be wonderful places to care for children, but homes are also full of hazards, including electrical appliances, stairs, bathtubs, and dozens of poisonous medicines and household cleaners. Accidents are a leading cause of death in children. More children are crippled from accidents than from diseases. Most accidents could be prevented if more care were taken.

All accidents cannot be prevented, but you can decrease the risks greatly by following the ideas listed below.

Poisons

- Keep trash covered and out of children's reach.
- Keep cigarettes, cigarette butts, and all tobacco products away from children. Tobacco is poisonous when eaten.
- Provide a nonsmoking environment for children. Go outside to smoke because second-hand smoke is dangerous. Fumes from e-cigarettes are also dangerous.
- Keep perfumes, cosmetics, and other products in high cabinets with safety latches or locks.
- Do not store alcoholic beverages, cleaning supplies, cosmetics, pet supplies, medicines, vitamins, gasoline, paint thinners, fertilizers, weed killers, or other poisons in areas used by children.
- Clean up immediately after parties when alcoholic beverages were served.
- Store hazardous products in their original containers. Do not transfer them to used food or beverage containers or to food storage areas.
- Keep purses out of reach of children.
- Do not use insect poisons, rat poisons, or weed killers when children are present.
- Dispose of leftover poisons immediately.
- Follow directions and caution warnings on drugs, cosmetics, and chemicals.
- Make sure that walls, furniture, and toys have only lead-free paint on them.
- Check to make sure there is no peeling paint on walls or furniture.
- Have your home checked for radon, which is an odorless gas that seeps through the soil into homes. Inexpensive test kits can be purchased at most building supply stores.
- Check toys and materials to make sure they contain nontoxic, nonpoisonous materials. Look for the "CP" or "AP" seal that shows art materials are safe for children.
- Keep syrup of ipecac in your first aid kit in case you must get your child to vomit up a swallowed poison.
- Store medicines right after use in a high, locked or otherwise childproof cabinet.
- Teach children not to taste things like berries, roots, plants, pills, or tablets without your permission.
- Label all houseplants, and remove poisonous plants.
- Remove all outdoor plants that might have poisonous parts.
- Label your telephone with the number for the Poison Control Center at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson: (601)

Falls and Falling Objects

- Position tables, chairs, shelves, and other furniture so they cannot turn over easily. If possible, have furniture with smooth edges.
- Screen windows. Make sure they open from the top, or block children's access to them.
- Provide railings on stairs, porches, decks, and lofts.
- Put tread mats or carpet on steps to prevent slipping, and attach a handrail that children can reach.
- Secure carpets and rugs so children cannot trip.
- Use safety gates to block access to stairs and other dangerous areas.
- Do not use infant walkers, especially near stairs.
- Use only high chairs with a wide base so they cannot tip over easily.
- Use high chairs with a waist strap or a belt.
- Never leave infants in infant carriers or seats on high surfaces such as tables, counters, or chairs.
- Never leave infants unattended on high surfaces such as changing tables.
- Keep sides of playpens and cribs raised always. Make sure that crib sides cover at least three-fourths of a child's height.
- Keep electric cords to lamps and appliances where children cannot reach them.
- Keep unused rooms, basements, and attics locked when children are in your home.
- Make sure that all doors to rooms and closets can be unlocked from both sides.
- Place heavy items (like irons or skillets) out of reach of children.
- Teach children which areas are safe or unsafe for climbing. Shelves and counters are not safe for climbing.
- Wipe spills from floors immediately.
- If your garage door has an electric opener, make sure it has a safety feature that stops the door and makes it go back up when it touches an object or a person.

You may use Publication 2322 as a checklist, and see how well you are doing with safety in your house. Review the checklist from time to time to maintain safety.



Follow us on Facebook for expert tips and useful information regarding agriculture, safety, wildlife and more! For more information or for free, useful publications, visit our website at <http://extension.msstate.edu>.



MDAC Releases New Guidance Regarding Pesticide Applicator Certification and Licenses in Light of COVID-19

Commercial and Licensed Pesticide Applicators:

- For all license holders whose certification expires in 2020, MDAC will extend certification for 1 year.
 - *License holders are considered persons who advertise or receive fees for:*
 - *Wood Destroying Insect Control*
 - *General Pest and Rodent Control*
 - *Horticultural Pest and Weed Control*
 - *Orchard Pest Control*
 - *Domestic Animal Pest Control*
 - *Fumigation Pest Control*
 - *Agricultural Pest and Weed Control*
 - *Aquatic Weed Control*
 - *Right-of-Way Weed Control*
 - For example, if your license expires April 11, 2020, you will receive a revised license with an expiration date of April 11, 2021.
- Commercial certification (*persons who use or supervise the use of a restricted use pesticides that cannot charge a fee or advertise for performing applications*) will be extended for 1 year.
- New Licensed and Commercial applicators will be reviewed and tested on a case-by-case basis.

Private Applicators:

- For all private applicators (*persons who use or supervise the use of pesticide which is classified for restricted use for purposes of producing any agricultural commodity on their own or leased property*) whose certification expires in 2020, MDAC will extend their certification period for 1 year.
- Training for new private applicator certification will be handled by Mississippi State University Extension Service (MSU-ES) through your local county extension office. MSU-ES county extension offices can be found on the following website: <http://extension.msstate.edu/about-extension/county-extension-offices>

These measures will remain in effect until further notice. Please direct any questions to the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce – Bureau of Plant Industry by calling (662) 325-3390.



SOCIAL DISTANCING

reducing the close contact between people to slow the spread of infections or diseases; includes limiting large groups of people coming together, closing buildings and cancelling events.

AVOID

- group gatherings
- sleepovers
- play dates
- concerts
- theaters
- athletic events
- crowded retail stores
- malls
- gym workouts
- mass transit system
- visitors in your home

USE CAUTION

- local restaurants
- grocery stores
- take-out food options
- picking up medication
- church services
- visiting the library
- playing at the park
- **keep your distance, wash hands, don't touch your face

SAFE

- stay home
- curb side pickup
- play outside
- read a book
- call or video chat friends & family
- go for a walk/hike
- listen to music
- clean
- cook
- go for a drive



HOW TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AND TEENS DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Take time to talk with your child or teen about the COVID-19 outbreak. Answer questions and share facts about COVID-19 in a way that your child or teen can understand.

Reassure your child or teen that they are safe. Let them know it is ok if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.

Limit your family's exposure to news coverage of the event, including social media. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand.

Try to keep up with regular routines. If schools are closed, create a schedule for learning activities and relaxing or fun activities.

Be a role model. Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well. Connect with your friends and family members.

Cleaning

vs.

Disinfecting

Cleaning refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. Cleaning does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfecting refers to using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks) with household cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface, following label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

EPA-Registered Disinfectant
1/3rd cup bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

If you need specific cleaning instructions on how to clean and disinfect your households with after someone has been isolated in "Home Care" for the COVID-19 please let us know.

Source: www.cdc.gov



SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness.

Symptoms* can include

FEVER



COUGH



***Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.**

Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

SHORTNESS OF BREATH



For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms

SHARE FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

FACT 1

Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

FACT 2

For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

FACT 3

Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.

FACT 4

There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

FACT 5

You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Seek medical advice if you

- Develop symptoms

AND

- Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.



Stop Germs! Wash Your Hands.

When?

- After using the bathroom
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage



How?



Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.



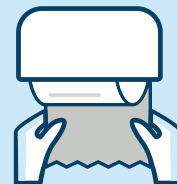
Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.



Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.



Rinse hands well under clean, running water.



Dry hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important things we can do to stop the spread of germs and stay healthy.

LIFE IS BETTER WITH

**CLEAN
HANDS**



www.cdc.gov/handwashing

This material was developed by CDC. The Life is Better with Clean Hands Campaign is made possible by a partnership between the CDC Foundation, GOJO, and Staples. HHS/CDC does not endorse commercial products, services, or companies.



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Can Animals Contract the Coronavirus?

Pets and other domestic animals are not considered at risk for contracting COVID-19, and the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine recommends that animal owners consult the American Veterinary Medical Association to get the facts.

Dr. Kent Hoblet, dean of the college, encouraged animal owners to consider AVMA guidelines as their primary resource on vaccines and animal illnesses related to COVID-19 and refrain from sharing misinformation circulating through social media and other unofficial sources. One common falsehood involves COVID-19 -- one of many types of coronaviruses -- infecting animals. "No animals in the United States have been identified with COVID-19," Hoblet said. "A canine respiratory coronavirus and a canine enteric coronavirus do exist and may cause illness in pets, but they are not related to the current human coronavirus infections."



Another misconception involves a cattle vaccine for COVID-19, Hoblet said. While there is a vaccine for use in cattle with bovine coronavirus, the components are not related to the virus currently affecting humans.

"Bovine coronavirus infections have been known for many years to cause disease in cattle," he said. "Clinical signs of infection usually involve calf diarrhea, adult dysentery or respiratory disease as part of the shipping fever complex. Bovine coronavirus is not transmissible to people. The vaccine for use in cattle will neither infect nor protect humans."

For the most current information on COVID-19, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>.

The AVMA webpage dedicated to answering questions regarding coronavirus in animals can be found at <https://www.avma.org/blog/what-do-you-need-know-about-coronavirus>.



Raised Beds

With so much uncertainty in the world today, many people are feeling that they need to get back to the basics in life. I'm receiving lots of calls about growing a garden. Many people want to grow their own food, but don't necessarily want the work of a large garden. I suggest that people start with raised beds. Below you will find information from our horticulturalist, Dr. Gary Bachman.

Mississippi gardeners will find that raised beds offer many advantages. They are easier on our backs and joints, but perhaps the greatest benefit of raised beds is the increased water drainage. Most landscape and garden plant problems I come across in Mississippi are related to poorly draining soil.

Growing plants and flowers in raised beds means the texture of the planting medium will remain loose and airy because it is not being walked upon. Raised beds also allow you to grow vegetables and other plants more densely than more traditional garden or landscape beds.

The construction parameters of raised beds are quite simple. The width of the bed should be no more than 4 feet. At this width, the longest reach is only 2 feet, which gives gardeners easy access to the bed from either side.

Sides constructed from hardscape materials will keep the growing medium where it belongs. The choice of materials is up to the gardener, but I like the newer treated lumber.

If you use lumber, I suggest 2-by-6-inch, 2-by-8-inch or 2-by-10-inch boards, depending on how deep you want the beds to be. A deeper bed gives you more planting options.

Of course, cedar, fir and redwood have natural resistance to decay if you don't want to use treated lumber. These materials are more expensive but will last much longer than untreated pine. Other options include using block, recycled concrete or recycled plastic boards.

You could fill the raised bed with native soil because the height of the bed will greatly improve drainage. But I want you to change your garden paradigm a little bit and treat your new raised bed like a very large container.

I never recommend using only native soil in containers. I like to see a lot of organic matter worked into that soil. In fact, my raised beds are filled with commercial bagged container media with a high percentage of peat moss, vermiculite and perlite. This media remains light, fluffy and well-drained with excellent porosity.

How much growing media or soil will a new raised bed need? A quick formula is to multiply length by width by depth, all measured in feet. This equation works for any raised bed regardless of dimensions.