

# TARRANT COUNTY

## NEWS & INFORMATION



March 2011



www.tarrantcounty.com

March is Texas SmartScape Month

## Making Your Yard Work for You!

Spring-like weather is beginning to spread across North Texas and as the warmer weather creeps up on us, it's time to step outdoors and embrace the green world that's been hibernating all winter. Are you wondering how you can use what you've got to make your yard and flower beds beautiful? The idea behind SmartScaping is to use native plants, native landscaping techniques, and what you may already have at home to bring your yard and garden to their full potential.



Here are some helpful tips that will help make your yard work for you:

- Composting is a great way to boost the mineral content of the soil, and it can also be used to mulch and protect your plants from late frosts. For nutrient rich compost, rake up leaves left on your yard, compost them with scrape fruits/vegetables and shredded paper and you're ready to go. Or composted leaves, alone, may even be left directly on the lawn to add nutrient value as they continue to break down.
- This year, add some native plants to your landscape. Did you know native plants are less likely to be effected by Texas weather changes, local diseases and pests? This will cut down on watering and the need to use chemicals to protect your landscaping.
- Try to avoid using pesticides and fertilizers. First, consider using eco-friendly organic alternatives instead of potentially harmful chemical products. If you must use chemicals, try to utilize them in a way that keeps all chemical products out of the waterways and drainage easements. This will prevent harmful storm water contamination.

If you practice SmartScaping techniques, you can create a beautiful landscape and save money at the same time. If you would like more information on how you can utilize SmartScaping techniques, please visit the Texas SmartScape webpage: <http://www.txsmartscape.com/>.

## Learn how to help others to live financially savvy

Finding reliable guidance on financial management topics can be a challenge. Since 1906, Texas AgriLife Extension Service has provided Texans with financial management instruction and is now training volunteers who will be able to provide their neighbors with the education and tools needed for living financially savvy.

The Building Dollar\$ and Sen\$e Volunteer Initiative is an AgriLife Extension program that provides volunteers with 30 hours of training in financial management and literacy education. In return, the volunteers agree to give back a minimum of 30 hours of service in return. The volunteer opportunities are diverse – giving presentations for local community groups, assisting with lesson series, distributing information at community fairs or events and much more. Previous financial management training is not required, however, an interest in living financially savvy and helping others do the same is.

Each participant who completes the training will receive a Certificate of Completion that will indicate that the proud volunteer has the tools and knowledge needed to represent the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. The training focuses on developing and using spending plans, tracking expenses, managing credit, understanding risk, and planning for retirement.

Training classes will begin on Friday, April 1, and continue on subsequent Fridays: April 8, 15, 29, May 6 and May 13. All classes will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the 5th floor conference center of the Tarrant County Plaza Building at 200 Taylor Street in downtown Fort Worth.

For more information call 817-884-1294.

### Health Tidbit

March is National Nutrition Month, and a healthy diet high in fruits and vegetables can help lower a person's risk for chronic diseases such as certain cancers and cardiovascular disease.

You can learn more about adding fruits and vegetables to your diet by visiting Tarrant County Public Health's Web site at <http://health.tarrantcounty.com> and clicking on the 'Live A More Colorful Life!' button.

On the 'Live A More Colorful Life!' page, you will find easy-to-access information, including tips for selecting fresh fruits and vegetables, recipes from well-known local chefs and nutritionists, and ongoing features highlighting produce that is in season locally.

## District Clerk Expanding to New Northwest Sub-Courthouse

The Tarrant County District Clerk's Office is pleased to announce the expansion of its Passport Section and Court Document lookup services to the new Northwest Sub-Courthouse beginning around March 28. This will bring to five the number of convenient locations available to the members of our community to apply for U.S. Passports as well as to view and obtain copies of records such as criminal background checks, divorce decrees and other district court documents. The new office will be open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For additional information regarding the new office, passport requirements or court document lookup services, please call 817-884-2520.

## Visit Travel Health Services before traveling abroad

Traveling abroad can be fun and exciting. However, getting sick while you are there – perhaps even cutting your vacation short due to health problems – can spoil a good time.

Tarrant County Public Health's Travel Health Services helps people be better prepared for travel abroad. Travel Health offers destination dossiers so that you will know what the health conditions are like in countries that you plan to visit, as well as health consultations, travel vaccinations, booster shots and International Certificates of Vaccination - the famous 'yellow cards' you may be asked for while traveling.

Tarrant County Public Health offers services at four locations:

- Tarrant County Public Health Main Campus  
1101 South Main Street  
Fort Worth
- Arlington Public Health Center  
536 W. Randol Mill Road,  
Arlington
- Southlake Travel Health Services,  
1400 Main, Suite 340,  
Southlake
- Watauga Public Health Center  
(1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month)  
6601 Watauga Road, Suite 122,  
Watauga

Appointments are required at all locations. Office visit and prescription fees apply. Vaccination costs vary according to vaccines required. For more information, call 817-321-4707.