

TARRANT COUNTY

NEWS & INFORMATION



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www.tarrantcounty.com

Tornado safe room rebate offered

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has provided a grant to help Tarrant County residents build tornado safe rooms.

"Historically, we have seen that safe rooms save lives," said Tarrant County Emergency Management Coordinator Melissa Patterson. "This program will reimburse a homeowner or developer for half the cost to install an individual safe room in an existing or planned home, up to \$3,000."

The safe room program will be administered locally through the Tarrant County Emergency Management Office (817-884-1804). To print out an application, or to get more information on safe rooms including construction plans and specifications, go to www.tarrantcounty.com and click on "Tarrant County Tornado Safe Room Rebate Program" under the "What's New" banner.



Local youth create winning artwork

Tarrant County Public Health (TCPH) is pleased to announce the winners of this year's Public Health Week Poster Contest:

- **Alexis Arrellano - 1st Grade,**
D. McRae Elementary, Fort Worth; Luis Fernandez – teacher
- **Caitlin Buendia - 2nd Grade,**
Castleberry Elementary, River Oaks; Kelsy Batson – teacher
- **Aaliyah Wells - 3rd Grade,**
Bill J. Elliott Elementary, Fort Worth;
Taylor Flowers & Christopher Valentine - teachers
- **Muiez Qureshi – 4th Grade,**
Watauga Elementary, Watauga; Deanna Thomas – teacher
- **Lauren Jackson - 5th Grade,**
Remington Point Elementary, Saginaw; Shannon Jackson –teacher
- **Kaylee Phillips - 6th Grade,**
Ed Willkie Middle School, Saginaw; Shannon Jackson –teacher
- **Darion Del Val - 7th Grade,**
Irma Marsh Middle School, River Oaks; Pamela Spangler – teacher
- **Yasmine Al-Assi - 8th Grade,**
Irma Marsh Middle School, River Oaks; Pamela Spangler – teacher

The annual Public Health Week Poster Contest challenged students in grades 1 - 8 to produce original artwork related to the theme "Safety is No Accident: Live Injury-Free." Crosswalk safety, safe biking and texting while driving were some of the creative visuals the students used to illustrate the theme. The winning artwork will be added to the Public Health Week Poster Contest Gallery, located at Tarrant County Public Health's main building, 1101 S. Main Street, Fort Worth. The artwork can also be seen on the TCPH Web site: <http://health.tarrantcounty.com>.



Household chemicals need proper disposal

Most Tarrant County residents, including those living in unincorporated areas, have the option to dispose of household hazardous chemical waste at Fort Worth's Environmental Collection Center (ECC), 6400 Bridge Street, located at the junction of Interstate 30 and Loop 820.

Household chemical wastes are often disposed of improperly by people pouring them down the drain,

onto the ground, into storm sewers or into trash bags. Pouring waste onto the ground or into storm sewers is the same as pouring it directly into a creek. A single quart of used motor oil can pollute up to 250,000 gallons of water. Old paint, pesticides, automotive fluids, household cleaners, solvents, batteries and pesticides are all examples of household chemicals that could be hazardous to the environment

if disposed of improperly.

Thirty-seven North Central Texas cities have contracted with Fort Worth to allow their citizens to use the ECC to dispose of their household hazardous waste. Before using the ECC, Tarrant County residents who live in the unincorporated areas must obtain a free voucher from the County Environmental Specialist at 817-884-2634.

Live A More Colorful Life: Eat more fruits and vegetables

In the fight against obesity, Tarrant County Public Health (TCPH) has combined innovative partnerships and real-life activities to promote healthy behaviors through its obesity prevention campaign called Live A More Colorful Life (LAMCL).

The LAMCL campaign, funded through the Texas Department of State Health Services, promotes the benefits of incorporating fruits and vegetables into daily diets as a step towards reducing and preventing obesity.

The campaign was instrumental in establishing a farmers market in Richland Hills and in marketing of the farmers market in Pantego. As a result, the North Central Texas Farmers Market Association was able to further develop its partnership with TCPH, including adding another farmers market at the Public Health main building in Fort Worth. The markets will open after Memorial Day, and the hours and days of operation will be placed on the TCPH Web site.

Among the measures of the campaign's success is the increased redemption of WIC vouchers in exchange for produce. More than \$73,000 in vouchers was redeemed for fresh fruits and vegetables during the spring and summer of 2010, compared to \$56,000 the previous year.

Other examples of the campaign's success can be seen in the school and community gardens at the Southeast YMCA and at Richland Elementary. Families who use the YMCA nurture the garden and cultivate fresh herbs and vegetables. This year, nine more gardens are being added in partnership with the Tarrant Area Food Bank. The plan is to donate a portion of the harvest to food bank recipients.

The LAMCL Web site is updated monthly and includes information about locally grown produce. It also features recipes that use locally grown produce.

To learn more about Live A More Colorful Life, visit the Tarrant County Public Health Web site: <http://health.tarrantcounty.com>.