

# Family and Community Health “Connections” in Mason County

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## What are the symptoms of heat stroke?

During the summer, people tend to spend more time outdoors for longer periods of time, which can lead to a higher risk of a heat-related illness, such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

The [American College of Emergency Physicians](#) reports that each year there are hundreds of fatalities and countless emergency department visits due to heat-related illnesses. Older adults, babies and young children, as well as those with medical conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease or obesity, are particularly susceptible to the heat.

“We recommend everyone, especially if they are at a high-risk for heat-related illness, to be aware of the symptoms of heat stress, especially heat exhaustion and heat stroke,” said Mike Lopez, DrPH, [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service](#) health program specialist in the agency’s [Family and Community Health Unit](#).

“However, anyone can succumb to heat, especially in humid conditions and in combination with outdoor activity,” Lopez said. “Plus, you have to consider other factors that may be at play such as drinking alcohol, inadequate hydration and possible reactions from medication.”

Heat stroke is the most severe heat-related illness, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). It can occur when a person’s body temperature rises above 103 degrees and seemingly loses the ability to properly regulate its temperature. Kellstedt said a particularly notable symptom of heat stroke is that the body actually stops sweating.

Additional heat stroke symptoms can include:

- Headache.
- Weakness.
- Confusion.
- Dizziness.
- Agitation.
- Slurred speech.
- Hot, red, skin.
- Fast, strong pulse.
- Nausea.
- Vomiting.
- Loss of consciousness.

If a person has these symptoms, Lopez said it should be regarded as a medical emergency and to immediately call 911. He also encourages moving the person to a shaded, cool area or into an air-conditioned space and trying to lower the body’s temperature.

“Cool the individual with water” he said. “Wet the skin and place cool, wet clothes or compresses on key points, such as the head, neck and armpits. Do not give the person anything to drink unless they are conscious and safely able to do so.”

Lopez noted that these suggestions for heat exhaustion and heat stroke are not meant to replace the advice of a medical professional, and it is ideal to consult with a physician or other qualified health professional as soon as possible.

<https://agrifetoday.tamu.edu/2023/06/06/what-are-the-symptoms-of-heat-stroke/>

## Ignite gardens with newest Texas Superstar – the firecracker plant Texas-tough, versatile plant provides pops of flaming colors

Homeowners looking to add a touch of fiery brilliance to their garden should look no further than the firecracker plant, named the newest [Texas Superstar](#).

The firecracker plant comes from the vibrant landscapes of Mexico and Guatemala, said Greg Grant, [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service](#) horticulturist, Smith County, and Texas Superstar executive board member. This showy, tender plant has a delicate, wispy appearance, and the pops of color are a show-stealer in a wide range of landscape uses.

Despite its delicate looks, the firecracker plant is a vigorous and versatile addition to any environment, Grant said. In Texas, it thrives as an annual or container plant in the northern third of the state, a tender perennial in the middle third, and a long-lived, evergreen perennial in the lower third.

“Its adaptability makes it an excellent choice for gardeners across the state,” he said. “They really become showy during the dog days of summer, but they’re a good investment because they perform from April to the first frost. Firecracker plants are selections that can make first-time gardeners look good and require very little attention.”

To be designated a Texas Superstar, a plant must perform well for growers throughout the state. Texas Superstars must also be easy to propagate, ensuring the plants are widely available and reasonably priced.

### Firecracker plant care, maintenance

Regarding care, Grant said firecracker plants adapt well to most soil types and thrive in areas with good drainage. It prefers low to medium waterings, making it suitable for water-wise gardens and arid parts of the state.

Grant suggests watering plants every few weeks when experiencing drought conditions, but they should be fine if the plant is not wilting.

“Their toughness and ability to grow is another characteristic that ties back to the investment,” he said. “It is going to grow and look better as the season progresses, unlike other annuals that are at their best when we get them home.”

Gardeners in the northern half of Texas can either replant firecracker plants each year or plant them in containers and overwinter it indoors or in a greenhouse.

Another characteristic that might interest homeowners is that the firecracker plant is also a magnet for hummingbirds, Grant said. The blossoms are especially attractive to hummingbirds and can turn a garden into a frequent stop.

Texas Superstar is a registered trademark owned by [Texas A&M AgriLife Research](#). Plants are designated by the Texas Superstar executive board, which comprises nine horticulturists from AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension and Texas Tech University in Lubbock.

Source: <https://agrifetoday.tamu.edu/2023/06/16/firecracker-plant/>



## CDC's Tips for Safe and Healthy Summertime Work

Whether you are planning an overseas vacation, getting ready for a staycation, or will be working outdoors, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's latest health tips, alerts, and social media updates include practical advice for travelers, swimmers, and everyone who wants to beat the summer heat. "Summer is a great time to travel and enjoy the great outdoors, but it's important to take simple, common-sense precautions," said CDC Principal Deputy Director Anne Schuchat, M.D. "From information about travel vaccinations to tips to prevent insect bites, CDC provides resources to help keep you and your loved ones healthy and safe."

**Beat the heat and rays** [Sunburn](#) is a common summertime injury. Unprotected skin can be burned by the sun's UV rays in as little as 15 minutes, but can take up to 12 hours for the skin to show the damage. CDC recommends staying out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when its UV rays are at their highest level. Sunscreen is recommended for anyone working and playing outside in the summer, even on cloudy days. [Hats, sunglasses, and long sleeves](#) are also recommended for outdoors activities.

**Children's health and safety:** Summer activities, such as riding a bike and playground time, are great for a child's development. To keep kids healthy and safe all summer long, be sure children use [helmets that fit well](#) while riding their bikes and follow playground safety tips from CDC's website. Parents should ensure children stay safe while traveling in cars. Children should be [properly buckled](#) in a car seat, booster seat, or seat belt —whichever is appropriate for their weight, height, and age — on every trip. [Properly buckling up](#) [image icon](#) reduces serious and fatal injuries by up to 80 percent. Children under age 13 are best protected in the back seat.

**Young Worker Safety and Health:** [Young workers](#) (ages 15–24) have higher rates of job-related injury compared to adult workers. To help keep young workers safe at their summer jobs, CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is participating in the social media campaign, [#MySafeSummerJob](#) [external icon](#), to provide [workplace safety and health information](#) and resources to employers of youth, young workers, parents, and educators. My Safe Summer Job is a collaboration between government agencies—including the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and NIOSH—and numerous professional and non-profit organizations, including CareerSafe and the National Safety Council. The campaign is raising awareness about job-related hazards and how to address them, workers' rights and responsibilities, voicing safety concerns on the job, and injury prevention.

**Food safety:** Food poisoning peaks during summer months due to warmer temperatures, which can let [foodborne germs thrive](#). Each year, 1 in 6 Americans get sick from eating contaminated food. CDC also has advice [for food safety when grilling](#).

**Insect protection:** [Protect yourself and your family from insect bites](#) by using [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-registered insect repellents](#) [external icon](#) with active ingredients such as DEET. Apply repellents only to exposed skin or clothing, as directed on the product label and always follow instructions when applying insect repellent to children.

For more tips check out the entire article below:

Source: [CDC's Eight Tips for Safe and Healthy Summertime Work and Play](#) | [CDC Online Newsroom](#) | [CDC](#)



## **Aguas Frescas Watermelon and Lime**



<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (96g)
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 7g	3%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 6g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
<b>Protein 0g</b>	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 6mg	0%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 94mg	2%

\*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

### **Ingredients:**

- ◇ 5cups [seedless watermelon](#) cubed
- ◇ 3cups [water](#) divided
- ◇ 5-6 [mint leaves](#)
- ◇ 1 [lime](#) sliced for garnish
- ◇ 1 cup [ice](#)

***Did you know that watermelon is made of 96% water and a great way to hydrate these hot summer days?***

### **Directions:**

1. Combine watermelon, 1 cup of water, and mint leaves into a blender until liquefied.
2. Pour the watermelon mixture into a 2 quart pitcher, add 2 cups of water and ice, stir together.
3. Garnish the drink with thinly sliced lime rings and enjoy.
4. Serve or store in refrigerator up to 2 days.

**\*Tip:** Use a strainer when pouring the liquefied watermelon into the 2 quart pitcher for a thinner consistency.

Source: <https://dinnertonight.tamu.edu/>

## **County News**

A Fresh Start to a Healthier You!

Location: 124 E Mesquite Street

Time: 10:00am-11:00am

Tuesday, August 8	Session 1: Creating Safe & Healthier Meals
Tuesday, August 15	Session 2: Balancing Your Day
Tuesday, August 22	Session 3: Saving More at the Grocery Store
Tuesday, August 29	Session 4: Celebrating Small Bites

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