



Employee Newsletter

JULY 2020



JULY BIRTHDAYS

Angelia Leatherman	3
Sandra Page	3
Julie Peterson	4
Tim Howe	6
Jennifer Nachtrieb	8
Jacah Johnson	9
Keith Watkins	9
Sierra Wright	9
Jane Stiles	11
Tashena Roper	12
Katrina Plemmons	14
Jon Crist	15
Jason Rowland	15
Heather Weaver	15
Linda Conley	16
Jake Bryson	17
Jimmy Amos	20
Shannon Jones	21
Becky Stiles	21
Shawn Payne	22
Sky Beaver	23
Lee Mashburn	23
Ashley Raper	23
Amanda McGee	24
Alicea Mealer	24
Adam May	25
Lindsey Roberts	25
Dot Beasley	27
Lynn Hamby	27
Brett White	27
Ryan Wilson	28
Dedra Cook	29
Justin Dockery	29
Stacy Lindsay	30
Nicole Foster	31
Ruth Whitener	31

Ages 20 to 77

Why did the chicken cross the road? Captain Kirk: To boldly go where no one has gone before.

Commissioners Board Meetings

July 6, 6:30 pm (?)
July 20, 6:30 pm

PAY INCREASES/DISABILITY PREMIUMS

We are very fortunate that the Commissioners have voted to give County employees a 2% pay increase for the upcoming fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020. Your disability deductions (if you have them) went up to cover the associated increase in premiums. Also, if you elected new dental, medical, vision or Hartford life insurance, the premiums for those came out in June because those premiums are due the first of each month. If you leave the County, you don't pay premiums for medical, dental, vision, Hartford life, STD and LTD during your last month because all of those deductions are a month ahead. AFLAC, Flex and Liberty are not a month ahead.

Your pay for July 10th will be split between the old rate and new rate, so for regular folks, there will be 56 hours at one pay and 24 at another. For sheriff, detention, dispatch, EMS, landfill and anybody else not on a 40 hour per week schedule, your pay will be paid according to what you worked during each fiscal year. Your pay on July 24th will all be at the new rate.

CONSIDER 401K OR VALIC

Since we did get a pay increase, now is a good time to consider enrolling in 401k or VALIC and putting away some additional dollars for retirement...or if you already contribute to those, now would be a good time to increase your contribution. If you do it before you get used to the extra money, you won't notice it and you'll be doing something for your future self. The 401k enrollment form is on the County's website on the human resources page on the "TAX FORMS AND OTHER FORMS" tab of the employee information page. The VALIC enrollment instructions are in the VALIC document located on the policies and documents tab. If you're in your 30s or 40s it may feel like you'll never get to retirement, but I promise you it will happen sooner than you think and you'll be glad you put away some extra when you get there.

Q: Is swimming good for your figure?
A: If swimming is good for your figure, explain whales to me.

Tech Support: Click on the 'my computer' icon on the left of your screen.
Customer: Your left or my left.

Q: How can I calculate my body/fat ratio?
A: If you have one body and you have fat, your ratio is one to one. If you have two bodies, your ratio is two to one, etc.

The deductible year for our health and dental insurance ends on June 30. The new deductible year begins July 1st. Also, the Vision plan year starts over again on July 1st. Please remember this.

Harassment Training

On May 8 at 3:50 pm, I sent an email out to employees letting you know that you have been assigned a mandatory online harassment training. The deadline to complete the course is July 17th. If you have not yet completed the training, you need to do so in the next week or so, please. If you can't find your link, let me know and I will go into NEOGOV and reset your password to be Password1# and will send you a password reset email.

You do have to pass a test at the end of it so you will need to pay close attention as you go through. You might even want to take notes. I've had several people say they would never, ever complain about having to do the in-person training again. LOL! When you pass the test, you will get an email showing you successfully completed the course. You may forward that email to me and I will file it in your personnel file. Thanks so much!

Is there something you would like to see in the newsletter. Please email Melody at melody.johnson@cherokeecounty-nc.gov with any suggestions.

OSHA FactSheet

Working Outdoors in Warm Climates

Hot summer months pose special hazards for outdoor workers who must protect themselves against heat, sun exposure, and other hazards. Employers and employees should know the potential hazards in their workplaces and how to manage them.

Sun

Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and skin cancer. There are no safe UV rays or safe suntans. Be especially careful in the sun if you burn easily, spend a lot of time outdoors, or have any of the following physical features: numerous, irregular, or large moles; freckles; fair skin; or blond, red, or light brown hair. Here's how to block those harmful rays:

- Cover up. Wear loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Be sure to follow application directions on the bottle or tube.
- Wear a hat. A wide brim hat, not a baseball cap, works best because it protects the neck, ears, eyes, forehead, nose, and scalp.
- Wear UV-absorbent sunglasses (eye protection). Sunglasses don't have to be expensive, but they should block 99 to 100 percent of UVA and UVB radiation. Before you buy sunglasses, read the product tag or label.
- Limit exposure. UV rays are most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

OSHA Card—Protecting Yourself in the Sun
www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3166.pdf

Heat

The combination of heat and humidity can be a serious health threat during the summer months. If you work outside (for example, at a beach resort, on a farm, at a construction site) or in a kitchen, laundry, or bakery you may be at increased risk for heat-related illness. So, take precautions. Here's how:

- Drink small amounts of water frequently.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing—cotton is good.

- Take frequent short breaks in cool shade.
- Eat smaller meals before work activity.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol or large amounts of sugar.
- Work in the shade.
- Find out from your health care provider if your medications and heat don't mix.
- Know that equipment such as respirators or work suits can increase heat stress.

There are three kinds of major heat-related disorders—heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. You need to know how to recognize each one and what first aid treatment is necessary.

OSHA Heat Stress Fact Sheet:
www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/heat_stress.pdf

OSHA Heat Stress Quick Card:
www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3154.pdf

Lyme Disease/Tick-Borne Diseases

These illnesses (i.e., Rocky Mountain spotted fever) are transmitted to people by bacteria from bites of infected deer (blacklegged) ticks. In the case of Lyme disease, most, but not all, victims will develop a "bull's-eye" rash. Other signs and symptoms may be non-specific and similar to flu-like symptoms such as fever, lymph node swelling, neck stiffness, generalized fatigue, headaches, migrating joint aches, or muscle aches. You are at increased risk if your work outdoors involves construction, landscaping, forestry, brush clearing, land surveying, farming, railroads, oil fields, utility lines, or park and wildlife management. Protect yourself with these precautions:

- Wear light-colored clothes to see ticks more easily.

- Wear long sleeves; tuck pant legs into socks or boots.
- Wear high boots or closed shoes that cover your feet completely.
- Wear a hat.
- Use tick repellants, but not on your face.
- Shower after work. Wash and dry your work clothes at high temperature.
- Examine your body for ticks after work. Remove any attached ticks promptly and carefully with fine-tipped tweezers by gripping the tick. Do not use petroleum jelly, a hot match, or nail polish to remove the tick.

OSHA Lyme Disease Fact Sheet:
www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_LymeFacts/lyme fac.pdf

West Nile Virus

West Nile virus is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mild symptoms include fever, headache, and body aches, occasionally with a skin rash on the trunk of the body and swollen lymph glands. Symptoms of severe infection include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, and paralysis. You can protect yourself from mosquito bites in these ways:

- Apply Picaridin or insect repellent with DEET to exposed skin.
- Spray clothing with repellents containing DEET or permethrin. (Note: Do not spray permethrin directly onto exposed skin.)
- Wear long sleeves, long pants, and socks.
- Be extra vigilant at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Get rid of sources of standing water (used tires, buckets) to reduce or eliminate mosquito breeding areas.

OSHA West Nile Virus Fact Sheet:
www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/west_nile_virus.pdf

OSHA Safety and Health Information Bulletin:
 "Workplace Precautions Against West Nile Virus"

<http://www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib082903b.pdf>

Poison Ivy-Related Plants

Poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac have poisonous sap (urushiol) in their roots, stems, leaves and fruits. The urushiol may be deposited on the skin by direct contact with the plant or by contact with contaminated objects, such as clothing, shoes, tools, and animals.

Approximately 85 percent of the general population will develop an allergy if exposed to poison ivy, oak or sumac. Forestry workers and firefighters who battle forest fires have developed rashes or lung irritations from inhaling the smoke of burning plants.

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, tucked into boots. Wear cloth or leather gloves.
- Apply barrier creams to exposed skin.
- Educate workers on the identification of poison ivy, oak, and sumac plants.
- Educate workers on signs and symptoms of contact with poisonous ivy, oak, and sumac.
- Keep rubbing alcohol accessible. It removes the oily resin up to 30 minutes after exposure.

OSHA Web Page—Poisonous Plants:
www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/sawmills/poison.html

This is one in a series of informational fact sheets highlighting OSHA programs, policies or standards. It does not impose any new compliance requirements. For a comprehensive list of compliance requirements of OSHA standards or regulations, refer to Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. The voice phone is (202) 693-1999; teletypewriter (TTY) number: (877) 889-5627.

For more complete information:



U.S. Department of Labor

www.osha.gov

(800) 321-OSHA