

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS SUNDAY
MARCH 10th

Employee Newsletter

March 2019



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Kathy Killian	3
Cathy Davidson	5
Sara Smith	5
Billy Norton	6
Betty Totherow	6
Christopher Berry	7
Janice Costello	7
Andria Duncan	7
Peggy Graham	8
Evelyn Postell	8
Travis Evans	10
Lindsey Pertet	10
Bill Moyer	11
Mary Lane	12
J J Wooten	12
Tania Firebaugh	13
Paul Fry	13
David Layfield	13
Dana Allen	15
Earlene Leonard	15
Brent Hardin	16
Derrick Palmer	16
Debi Tucker	18
Alan Wildsmith	21
Jessica Dockery	22
Jake Chapman	25
Kevin Creasman	25
Becky Turner	28
David Kidd	29
Drew Silvers	29
Mandi Amos	30
Mitch Boudrot	30
Kim McClain	31

Ages 24 to 87

CONGRATULATIONS TO BEBEIE McCLURE WHO IS RETIRING APRIL 1ST FROM DSS AFTER 33.75 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE RETIREMENT SYSTEM. WE WISH YOU THE VERY BEST!

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION ON COUNTY WEBSITE

I have been working on the Employee Information link on the Human Resources page on the County's website. There are now four tabs on that link with just about any information an employee might need related to their employment. If there is anything else you'd like to see there, let me know and I'll try to get it out there.

The Policies and Documents tab contains the County Personnel Policy, the State Human Resources policy that applies to employees subject to the State Human Resources Act (DSS, EM and HD), a separate copy of the Harassment policy, EVERIFY and Right to Work posters, the Marketplace Notification, the Global Hazard communication, retirement handbooks, safety memo and workers comp form, information about the Local Government Federal Credit Union, EAN information and information about our 401(k) plan and our 457 deferred compensation plan and a couple other items.

The Insurance and Privacy tab contains the Summary Plan Document (SPD) which is the full policy for our health, dental and prescription plans. It also contains the summary pages from the SPD for a quick look at the benefits, a copy of the Summary of Benefits and Coverage (required by the Affordable Care Act). The Crescent information about precertification, health management and disease management are available on this tab, as well as information about SONA (pharmacy provider). The life and disability policies offered by The Hartford are there, as well as information about our vision plan through Community Eye Care. Information about the AllyHealth telemedicine benefit is listed, as well. There are also forms on that tab to file AFLAC wellness benefits and a form to file a FLEX 125 claim if you need to file one of those.

The Employee Newsletter tab contains just what it says (from October 17 to current.)

The Tax Forms and Other Forms tab have your federal and state income tax withholding forms, a direct deposit form, a blank time sheet, mileage and travel reimbursement forms and another copy of the workers comp form.

In the quick links section is a link that says MUNIS Self Service. This is where you can login to see your pay history, your tax information, you can change your phone number and address, update your W4 and NC4 information and retrieve your W2 if you can't locate it—even back to prior years. I highly encourage you to check this link out. It also has links to documents that you can view. Many of the same documents may be found on this page as on the County website by clicking the resources link in the top right hand corner. You may also do a payroll check simulation to get an estimate of how your pay would change if you changed your tax withholding or some other deduction. To login to MUNIS Self Service, your user name is first initial, last name, last four of social, so mine is mjohnsonxxxx. The password the first time you login is the last four of your social, and you may have to change it when you login. I highly encourage you to take advantage of this resource. It's very handy. If any of your personal information is incorrect, please correct it or let me know.

The other link under quick links, Human Resources Newsletters, is an archive of old newsletters from 2015 to Sept. 2017 that were transferred when we changed website vendors.

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

Commissioners' Board Meetings
March 4th 6:30 PM
March 18th 6:30 PM

EYE SAFETY

Each day about 2000 U.S. workers sustain a job-related eye injury that requires medical treatment. About one third of the injuries are treated in hospital emergency departments, and more than 100 of these injuries result in one or more days away from work.

How do eye injuries happen to workers?

- **Striking or scraping:** The majority of eye injuries result from small particles or objects striking or scraping the eye, such as: dust, cement chips, metal slivers, and wood chips. These materials are often ejected by tools, windblown, or fall from above a worker. Large objects may also strike the eye or face, or a worker may run into an object causing blunt-force trauma to the eyeball or eye socket.
- **Penetration:** Objects like nails, staples, or slivers of wood or metal can go through the eyeball and result in a permanent loss of vision.
- **Chemical and thermal burns:** Industrial chemicals or cleaning products are common causes of chemical burns to one or both eyes. Thermal burns to the eye also occur, often among welders. These burns routinely damage workers' eyes and surrounding tissue.

How do workers acquire eye diseases?

Eye diseases are often transmitted through the mucous membranes of the eye as a result of direct exposure to things like blood splashes, and droplets from coughing or sneezing or from touching the eyes with a contaminated finger or object. Eye diseases can result in minor reddening or soreness of the eye or in a life threatening disease such as HIV, hepatitis B virus, or avian influenza.

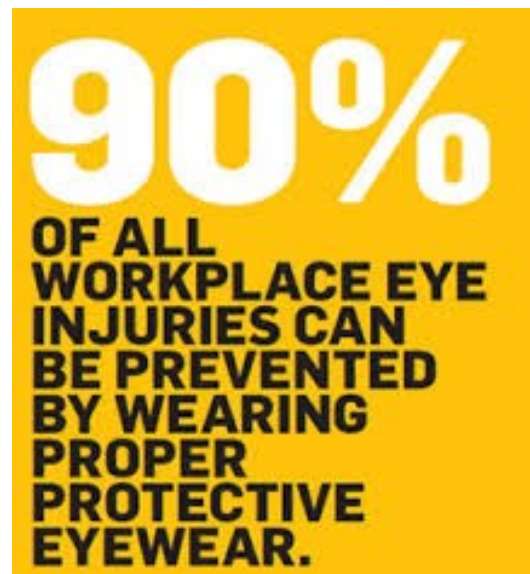
What can workers do to prevent eye injury and disease?

Wear personal protective eyewear, such as goggles, face shields, safety glasses, or full face respirators.

The eye protection chosen for specific work situations depends upon the nature and extent of the hazard, the circumstances of exposure, other protective equipment used, and personal vision needs. Eye protection should be fit to an individual or adjustable to provide appropriate coverage. It should be comfortable and allow for sufficient peripheral vision.

What can employers do to prevent worker eye injury and disease?

Employers can ensure engineering controls are used to reduce eye injuries and to protect against ocular infection exposures. Employers can also conduct a hazard assessment to determine the appropriate type of protective eyewear appropriate for a given task.





How Sleep Is Affected by Time Changes

What Difference Could an Hour Make?

By Michael J Brius, PhD



The daylight-saving time change will force most of us to spring forward and advance our clocks one hour.

This effectively moves an hour of daylight from the morning to the evening, giving us those long summer nights. But waking up Monday morning may not be so easy, having lost an hour of precious sleep and perhaps driving to work in the dark with an extra jolt of java. How time changes actually affect you depends on your own personal health, sleep habits, and lifestyle.

Moving our clocks in either direction changes the **principal time cue -- light** -- for setting and resetting our 24-hour natural cycle, or circadian rhythm. In doing so, our internal clock becomes out of sync or mismatched with our current day-night cycle. How well we adapt to this depends on several things.

In general, "losing" an hour in the spring is more difficult to adjust to than "gaining" an hour in the fall. It is similar to airplane travel; traveling east we lose time. An "earlier" bedtime may cause difficulty falling asleep and increased wakefulness during the early part of the night. Going west, we fall asleep easily but may have a difficult time waking.

How long will it take you to adapt to time changes? Though a bit simplistic, a rule of thumb is that it takes about one day to adjust for each hour of time change. There is significant individual variation, however.

How will you feel during this transition? If you are getting seven to eight hours of sound sleep and go to bed a little early the night before, you may wake up feeling refreshed. If you are sleep-deprived already, getting by on six hours, you're probably in a bit of trouble, especially if you consume alcohol or caffeine close to bedtime. In this situation, you may well experience the decrements of performance, concentration, and memory common to sleep-deprived individuals, as well as fatigue and daytime sleepiness.

What can you do to reset your internal clock to adapt more quickly to the time changes? Your circadian rhythm is internally generated but is influenced by the environment, behavior, and medications.

- As mentioned, **light** is the principal environmental cue. Light suppresses the secretion of the sleep-inducing substance melatonin. So it is important to expose yourself to the light during the waking hours as much as possible, and conversely, do not expose yourself to bright light when it is dark outside. For example, if you get up at night to go to the bathroom, do not turn on the light. Prepare beforehand by installing a night light. Interestingly, specifically timed light therapy may either advance or delay your sleep cycle, depending on when it is delivered.
- Sleep hygiene is a term used to describe those actions you can take to create sleep-friendly environments and enhance your chances of falling asleep, staying asleep, and sleeping soundly. Basic sleep hygiene includes reducing or eliminating caffeine and alcohol, exercising several hours before bedtime, creating calming rituals before bed to gradually relax yourself (taking a hot bath for example), and wearing ear plugs and eye masks, to name a few. Also important is going to bed and rising at the same time every day. Though there is no evidence that certain diets will actually influence your circadian rhythm, carbohydrates tend to make it easier to fall sleep.
- It is unlikely that medications would be needed for a simple one-hour time change of the clock, but in certain circumstances, like traveling across multiple time zones, hypnotic drugs like benzodiazepines may be used. Their indication is primarily to induce sleep when desired, to get on a new schedule. Given their potential for addiction and that they can negatively affect the quality of sleep, they should only be used under the direct guidance of a doctor or sleep specialist.

So there may be some tired and groggy people hitting the streets Monday morning, in the dark. Interestingly, some studies show an overall reduction in traffic accidents and fatalities due to daylight-saving time changes. However, one study showed a significant increase in accident rates on the Monday following daylight-saving time. The author attributed sleepiness as a cause. I am not sure exactly which way to go on this one, but maybe you may want to just sit back and have another cup of coffee -- decaf, of course -- and go in to work a bit later, when the sun is up?

From the WebMD Archives

Q. Why was St. Patrick given a desk job when he became a policeman?
A. Because he was too green to go out on patrol.

Q. Why are the Irish so concerned about global warming?
A. Because they're really into green living.

Q. Why do people wear shamrocks on St. Patrick's Day?
A. Because real rocks are too heavy to wear!

Severe Weather Preparedness Week in North Carolina is March 3-9, 2019 Statewide Tornado Drill scheduled for Wednesday, March 6 at 9:30 AM

March 3-9, 2019 is Severe Weather Preparedness Week in North Carolina. This week the National Weather Service and the North Carolina Department of Public Safety are teaming up to bring this severe weather safety campaign to all of North Carolina's residents. With warmer weather quickly approaching, now is the time to prepare for the severe weather season. If each North Carolina resident would take a few moments this week to learn about severe weather safety and implement a safety plan, then we would all be better off when severe thunderstorms and tornadoes inevitably strike our state and the likelihood of injury and fatalities caused by severe weather could be minimized.

Schools and government buildings statewide will hold tornado drills Wednesday, March 6, at 9:30 a.m. to practice their emergency plans. Test messages will be broadcast on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather radios and the Emergency Alert System. All North Carolinians are encouraged to participate in the drill.

This year's North Carolina Severe Weather Preparedness Week will combine multiple awareness weeks while focusing on tornadoes, large hail, lightning, flash flooding, and damaging straight-line winds. Click on each image to learn more about staying safe during that type of weather hazard.



North Carolina's annual statewide tornado drill for 2019 will take place on Wednesday, March 6, at 9:30 AM EST. Every school, business, work place, and family across the state is strongly encouraged to participate in the statewide tornado drill.



Evan: What's Irish and stays out all night?
Stephan: What?
Evan: Paddy O'Furniture

Here are some key points to remember about the drill:

- The drill will be broadcast on NOAA Weather Radio and the Emergency Alert System via the Required Monthly Test (RMT). There will not be an actual Tornado Warning issued.
- This drill and RMT will take the place of the usual weekly NOAA Weather Radio Alert test (RWT). That is, there will not be a weekly radio test done between 11 AM and Noon on that day.
- Most NOAA Weather Radio receivers (including the Midland WR-100 that many schools have) do not sound an audible alert for the RMT product, but instead, may have a blinking light on the display to indicate that an RMT was received. As such, when the RMT for the statewide tornado drill is initiated at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, March 6, 2019, there's a good chance that your NOAA Weather Radio will not sound an alarm.
- Since your NOAA Weather Radio may not sound an alarm at the time the RMT is issued, you will want to do one of the following: simply plan to start your tornado drill on your own at 9:30 AM; or, you can manually turn on your NOAA Weather Radio receiver around 9:25 AM, and simply listen to the audio broadcast to hear when the RMT is issued, which will mark the beginning of the statewide tornado drill.
- There will be no followup statements issued by the NWS to mark the end of the statewide tornado drill. It will simply be over when your group, school, business, organization, or family feel that you have adequately practiced your tornado shelter procedures.
- If there is actual severe weather occurring on the morning of March 6, 2019, the statewide tornado drill will be postponed. The alternate date for the drill is Friday, March 8, 2019 at 9:30 AM EST.