

HOWELL COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MARCH CALENDAR

WIC: 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31

Willow Springs WIC: 2

Mountain View WIC: 22

Family Planning: 1, 8, 16

Immunizations: 10, 15, 24

Covid-19 Vaccination Clinics: 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 (from 9am-4 pm)

Food Handlers: 7

Holiday's (closed): None

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Clinic Hours:

Monday-Friday 8-12 & 1-5,  
closed for lunch 12-1

Administration Hours

Monday-Friday 8-5

# Monthly Monitor

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## Food Storage Guidelines in a Power Outage by Justin Frazier, EPHS

In the event of an extended power outage, the safe storage of potentially hazardous food products requiring refrigeration becomes a serious public health concern. Refrigeration and freezer units without power can only maintain a safe product temperature for a short period of time.

If electricity is not quickly restored to your home and you have been unable to make alternate arrangements for the storage of your refrigerated, potentially hazardous food products, the following guidelines are to be followed to prevent serious foodborne illnesses:

- All refrigerated, non shelf-stable, potentially hazardous food items must be main-

tained at a temperature of 45 degrees Fahren-



heit or below and be protected from physical damage including water, chemicals, unauthorized personnel, etc. **Potentially hazardous foods are primarily those containing meat, fish, poultry and dairy products.**

- If the temperature of any non shelf-stable, potentially hazardous food item exceeds 45 degrees Fahrenheit for a period exceeding two (2) hours, the product must be disposed.
- If the temperature of any non shelf-stable, potentially hazardous food

item exceeds 45 degrees, and you cannot ascertain how long the product has been above 45 degrees, the product must be discarded.

- Frozen foods that become thawed, but remain below 45 degrees Fahrenheit pose quality concerns, **NOT** public health concerns. Decisions regarding the use/ and or refreezing of these products rest with their owner. If, however, the temperature of the thawed products exceeds 45 degrees Fahrenheit for a period of two (2) hours, they too must be discarded.

By adhering to the above guidelines, you can prevent serious illnesses from occurring, as well as protect yourself and your family.

## COVID-19 Vaccinations

Howell County Health Department is offering walk in no cost COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics every Wednesday in March from 9 am-4 pm. Moderna and Pfizer are the vaccines available.

No appointment is necessary. For more information please call 417-256-7078.



Eat more vegetables, fruit, and lean meats!

Time to start getting your garden ready for spring planting.

Someone calls a poison center every 8 minutes.



## National Nutrition Month

by April Bridges, WIC Nutritionist

March is National Nutrition Month. At WIC, we always encourage clients to visit [MyPlate.gov](http://MyPlate.gov) for help planning a healthy diet. Get a head start on making Nutrition month successful by trying a few tips you may find there. To *vary your veggies*, eat a rainbow of vegetables—have plenty of dark green, orange, and red ones. Also, try new ones more than just once. To *focus on fruit*, use them as snack

or after dinner dessert in place of sugary treats. *Make half your grains whole*: whole grains are easier to get than you might think, oatmeal is a great way to start the day, replace white rice with brown, and snack on popcorn. (Many people don't realize that popcorn is a whole grain!) *Go lean with protein*: have seafood at least two times each week; try other sources of protein like beans, tofu or nuts. Finally, *build strong*

*bones with dairy*. Sometimes it's hard to get in adequate calcium just from milk, especially if it is not your favorite drink. Remember that yogurt and cheese counts too, add these to snacks or meals to meet those needs. Be sure to choose low-fat versions and limit added sugars. By using the "MyPlate" visual aid with each meal, it is easy to fill your plate with all the right foods.

## Getting Ready for Spring Gardening

The first day of Spring is March 20th. You can start getting your garden ready now for spring and summer planting. Check your garden tools to make sure they are in good shape and repair them if needed. Clean your garden area and

check the soil. Having a soil test done at the local University Extension office can tell you if your soil needs amendments added. Plan on what you want to plant in your garden and start purchasing seeds and/ or start your warm weather crops indoors from seeds.

Start planting your cold weather crops in your garden now such as onions, lettuce, radish, broccoli, etc. Before you know it warmer weather will be here with all the healthy, nutritious vegetables you grew in your garden.

## Poison Prevention Week

from Vanessa Doss, RN

Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup> kicks off this year's Poison Prevention Week. Did you know every 8 minutes someone calls into the poison center? We often think of children needing the help and advice of the poison hotline but adults are at risk too. Keep in mind plants, mushrooms, bites or stings from insects, fumes, gases, medicines, vitamins, and herbs

can all be harmful to humans when precautions are not taken. Some helpful tips to protect your loved ones from being exposed to hazardous contaminants is to keep chemicals away from food storage areas, place chemicals out of reach or behind locked cabinets, never call medicine "candy", read the directions and labels before

using products, purchase products with child resistant packaging, and talk to your child or teen about safety when around hazardous cleaners or medicine. Anyone can call the poison hotline number for free and private advice at 1-800-222-1222. The hotline is staffed with trained nurses and pharmacists to answer questions and provide guidance. They also have a free app you can download for quick access.



## Howell County Health Department

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**Public Health: Prevent. Promote. Protect.**

The mission of the Howell County Health Department is to improve, promote and protect the health of Howell County through awareness, assessment, planning and assurance in order that our community may achieve their fullest health potential.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## Howell County Health Department Staff & Email

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