

CONSUMER Connection



8379 Piney Orchard Parkway, Suite A
Odenton, MD 21113

July-August 2015

Buy Produce in Season

Food in season is priced to sell. During the summer months, corn on the cob can cost as little as 10 cents an ear; at other times of the year it may cost twice as much. Shop your local farmer's market for great deals on local produce.

To check out local farmer's markets in Maryland go to this website: <http://www.visitmaryland.org/article/maryland-farmers-markets>

Save Money on Party/Picnic Supplies

Have you been to your local Dollar Store lately? They have a great variety of party supplies for cook-outs, birthday, seasonal or any other type of party. Find everything from plates to serving dishes and cutlery to balloons and party favors. If you are a little creative you can do an amazing themed party by sticking to certain colors and only adding a few of the more expensive items from the party store.

Make Barista Worthy Iced Coffee at Huge Savings

To make: Combine 6 ounces (1 1/2 heaping cups) medium to coarsely ground coffee with 4 cups room-temperature water in a glass container. Let sit at room temperature for 12 hours.

Strain through a mesh strainer lined with a coffee filter. (This base, about 2 3/4 cups total, will keep in the refrigerator for 2 weeks.)

To serve: Combine a scant 1/2 cup of the coffee base with equal parts of water and milk. Pour over ice.

Makes 6 servings.

Save Money on Summer Activities

Bored? Looking for some summer activities that won't break the bank? Check out Visit Maryland's website for Free Activities: <http://www.visitmaryland.org/things-to-do/free-things-to-do>

You'll find everything from Free Activities to Outdoor Movies to the Best Places to Buy Crabs. There are many inexpensive or even free things to occupy your summer hours!



Great Deals on Fitness

If you're a group retiree or part of a Medicare health plan, you may be eligible for a free "Silver Sneakers" membership, which gets you access to more than 13,000 participating fitness facilities around the country as well as special classes and activities. Also, it doesn't hurt to ask your local gym if they offer a discount.

Looking for some vacation clothes? Here are a few discount reminders....

Kohl's gives a 15 percent discount to those age 55-plus every Wednesday. Ross offers 10 percent off to shoppers 55 and older on Tuesdays when they sign up for the "Every Tuesday Club."



2014-15 MRSPA CONSUMER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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Be Aware of the Jury Duty Scam

There is a new scam out there where a person may call you and tell you that you missed Jury Duty and there is a warrant out for your arrest. They will offer to take care of it quickly for you if you provide your Social Security Number and date of birth. Some other scams reported indicated that the person also asked for a credit card number and for a small fee it would be taken care of quickly.

Courts do not make this type of telephone call. Many times people will be caught off guard, worrying that they missed a notice and will provide the caller the wanted information. Don't fall victim to this scam. If you receive a call like this, hang up. Do not give out any information.

Ways to Save Money

Skip the Convenience Store

A recent comparison on 10 common grocery store items at a convenience store and at the supermarket right next door revealed that a consumer can save a whopping 45 percent on the same items when purchased at the grocery store! That's saving more than \$2,300 per year if you spend at least \$100 each week on groceries.

Money Down the Drain

The Environmental Protection Agency says that the average U.S. home wastes about 10,000 gallons of water every year because of leaks. Replacing a single leaky toilet with an efficient model that meets EPA's "WaterSense" standard could save a family of four approximately \$2,000 in water and wastewater bills over the lifetime of the toilet.

Break A Truly Bad Habit

There are a lot of health reasons to give up bad habits like smoking. But don't overlook the financial incentives. Buying a single pack of cigarettes per day will cost you an average of about \$2,000 a year, or say, \$100,000 over 50 years of smoking.

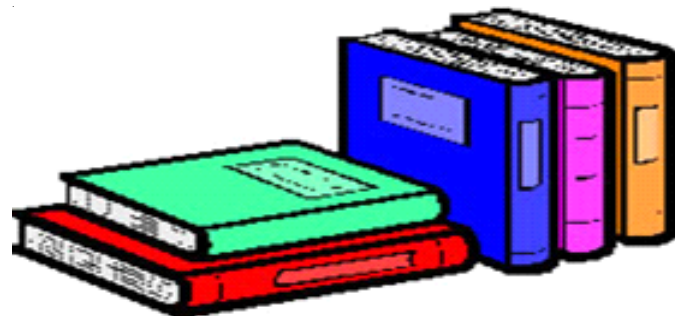
Red Cross Tips for Summer Grill Safety

- Always supervise a barbeque when in use
- Never grill indoors - not in your house, camper, tent or garage
- Make sure everyone, including the pets, stays away from the grill
- Keep the grill out in the open, away from the house, the deck, tree branches, or anything that could catch fire
- Use the long-handled tools especially made for cooking on the grill to keep the chef safe
- Never add charcoal starter fluid after the coals have been ignited
- Always follow the manufacturer's instruction when using grills.



Don't Forget About Your Library For Free Summer Fun!

The average American household spends about \$200 per year on books alone (U.S. Census Bureau), most of which could be borrowed for free from any of the nation's 17,000 public libraries. If you haven't been to your library lately, check it out. In addition to books, newspapers and magazines, the library has a wide variety of downloadable content, including e-books and e-magazines. You can also stream music and download an audiobook.



Have a safe and happy Summer!