

# Highway Patrol hiring for 2013

The Kansas Highway Patrol is accepting applications for a new class of recruit troopers, who will be set to begin their careers with the Patrol this coming January. This will be the 52nd recruit class, and marks the Patrol's effort to increase manpower on the highways in Kansas, as well as provide assistance to some local agencies who rely on the Patrol's assistance.

"The Kansas Highway Patrol is very excited to have this opportunity to start its third class in a year and a half," said Lt. Joshua Kellerman, public information officer. "With the additional state troopers Recruit Class No. 52 will provide, it enhances our ability to better serve the citizens of Kansas."

Applications are being accepted through Friday, June 29. Applicants will go through an extensive hiring process, which will include a written examination, physical agility test, polygraph exam, background investigation, interview, physical examination and psychiatric test. Upon successful completion of these steps, final offers of employment will be made.

The recruits will report to the Training Academy on Thursday, Jan. 3, to begin 22 weeks of training. The hiring process has been

condensed to a more timely process for applicants, and to increase the Patrol's ability to provide additional troopers on the road during a time when they are much needed. Applicants will go through a six month hiring process, rather than the yearlong process that was in place previously.

With retirements, promotions and short staffing in many areas, these new troopers will come at a welcome time.

Applicants are asked to promptly submit a tax clearance certificate at [www.ksrevenue.org/taxclearance.html](http://www.ksrevenue.org/taxclearance.html), along with an employment application at [www.jobs.ks.gov](http://www.jobs.ks.gov). This application site can also be accessed from [www.kansashighwaypatrol.org](http://www.kansashighwaypatrol.org); click on Career Opportunities, Current Openings, Apply Online.

If you mail hard-copy application and tax clearance materials, they must be post marked no later than June 29 and addressed to: Janice Kelly, c/o KHP Recruiting, 122 SW Seventh St., Topeka, Kan. 66603, (785) 296-8091.

For questions on the hiring process or what the position entails, go to [www.kansashighwaypatrol.org/careerop/co\\_trooper.html](http://www.kansashighwaypatrol.org/careerop/co_trooper.html), or call (785) 296-6800.



Kansas Highway Patrol Class No. 50, currently going through the Training Academy, chose a sledgehammer as its class symbol, representing the power and authority that comes from the people of Kansas which should never be abused.

## Senior Progress Center

Come and enjoy bingo at the Senior Progress Center Tuesday.

Activities for the week: **Monday:** 10:30 a.m. Skip Bo. **Tuesday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 11 a.m. bingo. **Wednesday:** cookie day. **Thursday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 a.m. pinochle game. **Friday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 a.m. pool game.

Menus for the week: **Monday:** sausage gravy, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, biscuits or bread, mandarin oranges. **Tuesday:** cook's choice entrée, cheesy broccoli, mixed fruit, bar cookie. **Wednesday:** lasagna, spinach sal-

ad, pears, garlic bread, pudding. **Thursday:** chicken pasta salad, carrots and onions, citrus slices, bread sticks, spice cake. **Friday:** hamburger patty, potato salad, baked beans, bun, cottage cheese with fruit.

The Thomas County Nutrition Center invites anyone 60 and older and guests to lunch. A contribution of \$3 per meal is suggested for seniors, \$5.25 for others. For anyone under 60, home delivery is \$5.75.

Make reservations at (785) 460-2901 by noon the day before.

## School Activities and Menus

**Colby Public Schools**  
Activities: **Monday:** 7 p.m. school board, Administration Building; 7 p.m. middle school vocal concert, Grade School Auditorium. **Tuesday:** last day of classes; 1:30 p.m. dismissal. **Wednesday:** league meeting, Scott City. **Friday:** Salina; varsity track state, Wichita. **Saturday:** varsity track state, Wichita.

Menus: **Monday:** cook's choice. **Tuesday:** breakfast: cook's choice; lunch: sack lunch.

**Heartland**  
Activities: **Saturday:** 2 p.m. graduation. **Monday:** semester exams, sixth through 11th grade; noon - dismissal; 7 p.m. board meet-

ing. **Tuesday:** semester exams sixth through 11th grade; noon dismissal. **Wednesday:** semester exams, sixth through 11th grade; noon - dismissal; end of quarter and semester. **Thursday:** 100 Holes for Heartland.

**Golden Plains**  
Activities: **Monday:** Board of Education, Selden. **Friday:** state track, Wichita.

**Brewster**  
Activities: **Monday:** state golf. **Friday:** high school state track. **Saturday:** high school state track.

**Colby Community College**  
Activities: **Monday:** 5:30 p.m. Board of Trustees.

# Lawn mowing advice ignores long-standing, tested standard

In "The Slacker's Guide to a Great Lawn," the May 2012 *Consumer Reports* has good tips on how homeowners can save hours of yard work, according to a K-State Research and Extension scientist.

"The article is misleading, though, in the section that advises homeowners to ignore the one-third rule when mowing. It simply doesn't address some important points that make the one-third rule the better choice," added Rodney St. John, turfgrass specialist stationed at K-State's Olathe horticulture center.

Ignoring the rule can diminish both lawn quality and environmental benefits, he said.

The one-third rule states that turf caretakers should never remove more than a third of grass blades' height - the plants' leafy green tissue - in a single mowing.

The article quotes a university scientist as saying the inspiration for this rule was 1950s U.S. Department of Agriculture research into using Kentucky bluegrass as a cattle forage. At that time, cutting the study grass by a third had led to the most rapid leaf production (i.e., thick regrowth).

The article goes on to say, however, that the rule's landscape uses are now coming under scrutiny. The article suggests most lawn grasses can thrive after losing half or more of their leaf tissue. It implies lawn owners also can let their turf exceed traditional height-range recommendations.

"That really made me blink - just dismissing the 60 years of research that's built up since the USDA study," St. John said. "Yes, strictly speaking, removing more than a third of turf height probably won't cause too much harm, in terms of individual plant health. But, there's more to a lawn than a single plant."

The K-State scientist said the major reasons for mowing with the one-third rule come down to: 1) grass plant stress and lateral spread and 2) environmental sustainability.

**Big stress equals 'skinny' turf**  
A basic in terms of horticultural health is that cutting off the top of a plant creates stress. The more tissue the plant loses, the greater its stress, St. John said.

That can be a real problem if an ice storm takes out the top half of an oak tree. If kept within certain limits, though, it can be a boost for forsythia shrubs and garden mums - which respond to being pinched back or pruned with new and often bushier regrowth.

"Years of research have shown lawn turfs can easily handle the stress of losing up to a third of their height," St. John said. "They also will fight back in ways that benefit your lawn."

"But, severe cuts can make turf plants vulnerable - to drought, heat, weeds, pests. It's a direct result of how the plants tend to respond. The greater the mow-

ing stress, the more energy turf plants will devote to getting tall again. And, that's not what you want."

Kansans' favorite tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass turfs are prime examples, he said. Tall fescue's response to severe cuts is to look more and more like the bunch grass it is. Bluegrass curtails daughter-plant production. Both take on a thinner and more spindly appearance. The fescue may seem coarser, too.

"In contrast, following the one-third rule stimulates lateral growth. It encourages turf plants to spread out sideways, rather than expend all of their energy growing up-up-up into the air," St. John said. "That lateral growth is what gives you a thick, dense lawn that looks beautiful, is comfortable for walking and play, and allows less room for weeds."

**Bagged clippings equals nutrient loss**  
The turf specialist is equally concerned about the clippings the article's mowing advice could create.

"Long clippings aren't easily mulched or dispersed back into the yard," St. John said. "So, mowing them off can remind you of cutting hay. You get all these clumps of cut grass that dry out on top of your lawn."

"If they're big enough, the clumps can actually smother and kill turf in spots. Even if they aren't, they're ugly enough that you'll probably end up raking them off."

With the one-third rule, clippings are small enough that they easily filter into the lawn, he said. They won't add to thatch, but will recycle their nutrients and reduce lawn fertilizer needs by 25 to 33 percent.

"It's the most efficient way available to make use of this natural resource," St. John said. "Of course, you can add clippings to a compost pile, but most homeowners don't compost. If they have to bag or rake and bag, they'll trash those clippings almost every time."

"Unfortunately, landfill space is finite. Cities such as Olathe are collecting yard waste and turning it into compost for residents. Cities such as Wichita have already considered banning the disposal of all yard waste, and I suspect that's a sign of the times. Yard waste makes up a significant part of what we throw away. But, clippings, at least, are amazingly easy to recycle in our own yard - if we just follow the one-third rule."



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