

## Great sledding weather



Rachel Johns experiences sledding for the first time in her life. After the big snow storm we had last week, it made for great sledding Saturday if you could stand the cold. — Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

# Disaster deadline is approaching

The deadlines for the United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency to accept applications under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program for this year crops have been established by the Kansas State Farm Service Agency Committee. The application closing date of March 15th applies to the following crops: Sorghum Cane, vegetable and melon crops plus, Amaranth, Chestnuts, Cotton, Pecans, Pumpkins, Safflower, Sesame, Squash, and Walnuts.

Crops eligible for Noninsured Assistance Program benefits are limited to those not insurable in the county and are produced for food or fiber. Included as eligible crops are Sorghum Cane (for forage and graze), floricultural, ornamental nursery, Christmas trees, turf grass sod, industrial crops, seed crops, aquaculture (including ornamental fish).

Interested producers who may wish to participate in the Noninsured Assistance Program must visit their local Farm Service Agency office to complete an Application for Coverage (Form CCC-471) and pay the applicable service fee by the applicable sales closing date for the specific crop. Administrative service fees are collected in order to help offset the cost of implementing the program and range from \$250 per crop per administrative county not to exceed \$750 per producer per administrative county with a \$1,875 maximum fee for multi-county producers.

In the unfortunate event that a producer does suffer a loss on their particular crop, a Notice of Loss (Form CCC-576) must be filed with the local Farm Service Agency office within 15 calendar days after the disaster occurrence, or the date the loss becomes apparent to the producer.

Once the Notice of Loss has

been approved and production evidence collected, the producer must file an Application for Payment. This is done at the local Farm Service Agency Office as well and must be filed prior to the immediately subsequent crop year acreage report date for the specific crop.

Producers are responsible for providing accurate and complete information. This includes timely certifying the unit's planted acreage and production with Farm Service Agencies. In general, acreage reporting deadlines are June 1st for small grain crops, and the earlier of August 1st or 15 days prior to the onset of harvest or grazing for all other crops. Production reporting deadlines are no later than the immediately subsequent crop year acreage reporting date for the crop. It's always important to check with the local Farm Service Agency office to determine what the acreage and or production reporting deadlines are for each specific crop.

When required, producers shall provide to Farm Service Agency verifiable or reliable production evidence for the crop by practice, type and variety, and it must be provided in a manner that can be easily understood. Producers shall maintain their production evidence for 3 years after the crop year it is initially certified.

This coverage entitles eligible producers to a payment of 55 percent of an average market price for the commodity if a natural disaster caused a 50 percent production loss or greater of an eligible crop.

Producers are limited to \$100,000 in benefits per person per crop year, they must not exceed the \$2 million gross revenue provisions, and they must comply with conservation compliance provisions in order to be determined eligible.

# Administrator explains departments

Norton County Health Department and PRN Home Health Agency

So what exactly does the health department (public health) do anyway? How long has there been a Medicare Certified home health agency in the county? These are both good and often heard questions posed to our department. Our hope is that these and many more questions will be answered by the time readers finish this article about the Norton County Health Department and PRN Home Health Agency.

Let's take a big picture view of public health before delving into the details of Norton County Health Department. How public health is provided in this nation varies from state-to-state and even from county to county. For Kansas this means that each county has its own local health department. About 25 other states operate in this same fashion. Norton County's creation of public health started when Lila Atwell, B.S.N. was hired as a "county health nurse" in 1975. Her office was in the basement of the Norton County Hospital. In 1977 a Medicare certified home health agency was added. This was actually done as a multi-county effort including Phillips, Rooks and Norton counties - joining together to form an agency with the name PRN Home Health Agency. This multi-county agency was eventually dissolved a few years later, but Norton retained the original agency name. As more staff and programs were added, the Norton County Health Department and home health agency moved to its present location at 801 N. Norton. This location went through a major renovation in 1997 (paid for with Norton County Health Department's savings) and an addition to the north side in 2000 (paid for entirely by a community development block grant and the Norton County Health Department's savings).

The Norton County Health Department and home health agency have both seen dramatic changes

since their inception. We now are a workforce of 13 people comprised of full time, part time and contract personnel. Staff is cross-trained to do a multitude of different programs and services. Norton County Health Department has a minimum of 9 grants that are renewed annually generating over \$110,000. Some of these grants provide the following programs/services:

WIC - supplemental food program for women, children and infants residing in Norton and Decatur Counties

Family Planning - reduced cost women's health program

Chronic Disease Risk Reduction - promotes a healthy lifestyle by focusing on increasing both the amount of physical activity and consumption of fruits and veggies as well as prevention of tobacco use and/or helping people quit in Norton County

Healthy Start Home Visitor - home visiting program to any recently delivered baby and their mom in Norton County to provide information on resources and health education

Unfortunately, many of the duties and obligations of public health are not funded. One example is:

Disease surveillance and investigation - tracking 65+ diseases that are by law to be reported to public health so we can rapidly respond to investigate those ill, minimize spread, assist primary care providers and prevent re-occurrence if possible through education and/or vaccination. Some of these diseases includes, but isn't limited to Tuberculosis, salmonella, e. coli, hepatitis C etc....

For over 30 years the PRN Home Health Agency has been providing an opportunity for people of all ages to recover from illness or injury at home or just have some help with daily life activities to stay safely in their home longer. We are the only home health agency that is Medicare certified in Norton County. This means for those that qualify, home

health care can be paid by Medicare. Nurse level care can include IV's, wound care, new diagnosis and/or medication teaching and weekly medication box management. Physical therapy is also an in-home service. We accept payment from Kansas Medicaid, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas, Area Agency on Aging and cash for services not covered by one of the fore mentioned. With this diversity of pay sources, most people will find an option that they qualify for and/or fits their budget. Besides the nurse level services, we have certified home health aides that assist patients with activities of daily living. Bathing, housekeeping, meal preparation, errands, blood pressure checks and foot care are some of the services provided to help our citizens remain safely in their home.

So what is the value of having the Norton County Health Department and PRN Home Health Agency to you? Because public health is focused on preventing people from getting sick and promoting healthy living the value of our department is often underestimated.

Did you know that for every dollar spent on a childhood immunization \$27 is saved? In 2009, Norton County Health Department vaccinated 3,148 people with 5,269 vaccines. These vaccines prevent sickness, disability and death. This means children stay healthy, parents go to work, and kids stay in school and those in the community with weakened immune systems aren't exposed to the diseases vaccines prevent. Parents in other parts of this world still have to watch their children suffer and even die to diseases we in America seldom even witness due to the effectiveness and availability of vaccines.

Our Family Planning program serves on average 90 clients. About 1/2 of these clients do not have health insurance. Without this program women would go without birth control, preventative screenings such as a PAP smear and an annual physical.

Our staff manages the WIC program in Norton and Decatur County. We know for every \$1 we spend managing this program it is a \$7 return to the community. In 2009, Norton County grocery stores took in \$91,634 of WIC checks and Decatur had \$28,151. This doesn't include all the non-WIC food purchases and shopping done by WIC participants.

Our home health agency keeps clients where we all prefer to be when we are aging or ill....at home. The rising cost of acute and long term care makes staying at home with adequate support from a multi-service agency like PRN Home Health Agency not only a preference, but a cost saving one as well for the patient and society as a whole.

Your Norton County Health Department and PRN Home Health Agency does all these things and much more utilizing only \$64,000 of local tax support. This is only 13-15% of the department's annual revenue. This means we not only provide a diverse array of services/programs to meet your needs, but we do so with very little of your tax dollars. We are a veteran workforce of 102 combined years of service and experience. Please contact us for further questions or to let us know how we can help to serve your needs better (785-877-5745).

Gina Frack, R.N., B.S. Administrator

3rd Annual  
**NORTON COUNTY HORSE COUNCIL**  
**BBQ AND BOOGIE**  
**HOG ROAST, DANCE AND**  
**TEXAS HOLD'EM TOURNEY AT NOON**  
**Saturday, March 5 - 6 p.m.-midnight**  
 •Eat 6-8 •Silent Auction 7-9 •Dance 9-12  
**Norton Eagles Club, Norton - Free Will Donation**  
 Silent Auction with lots of **GREAT DONATIONS!**  
**Good Food, Good Company and a Good Time!!**  
 Raising money for the equine facility at Elmwood Park;  
 announcers booth, handicap access, and general maintenance and upkeep  
**For More Info: Dave Donovan, 877-2148**  
**or Cindy Wegener, 877-2077**

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**Legislative Town Hall Meeting with**  
**Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer and Rep. Ward Cassidy**  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2011**

8:00-9:00 a.m.....Phillipsburg, 3rd Street Bakery  
 9:45-10:45 a.m. .... Norton, Town and Country Kitchen  
 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. .... Oberlin, Decatur County Courthouse, Courtroom 3rd Fl  
 1:45-2:45 p.m..... Atwood, Williams Brothers Grocery Store Deli  
 3:30-4:30 p.m.....St. Francis, Main Street Cafe

Pd by Ostmeyer for Senate, Lori Edwards, Treasurer  
 Rep. Ward Cassidy, Michael Day, Treasurer