



The HOME FRONT

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Help Make the World a Better Place



Did you know that by opening your home to a foreign exchange student you are taking on the role as a diplomat of the United States? Its true! Hosting a teenager from another country is form of public diplomacy – it gives both the host family and the student an

opportunity to learn from each other, exchange cultural experiences and most of all, form life-long relationships.

All that is required of a host family is to provide three meals a day, a place for the student to sleep and a little bit of TLC thrown in. Students can share a room with a same sex sibling that is within three years of their age. The students all come with their own spending money, health insurance and an eagerness to be part of your family.

STS Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, is looking for volunteer host families for the 2019/2020 school year. We accept all different types of families, from single parents, to newly marrieds, to empty nesters to same sex couples. The application process is simple, once you are completely vetted, you will have access to our student database where you can select the student that best fits in with your family.

If you would like to find out more about hosting one of our wonderful students, please contact Vicki Odom at (832) 455-7881 or email at vicki.stsfoundation@yahoo.com. I can get you started in helping to make the world a better place to live.

Streets

STREET SIGNS

When driving the community look at all signs. Look for graffiti, missing signs, faded signs, damaged/bent signs or poles. Gated section can be repaired or replaced by Onsite Facilities Manager. The non-gated section can be reported to Harris County for repairs or replacement.

STREET LIGHT OUTAGE

To report a street light out you will need to provide the street name and six digit pole number and report to <https://slo.centerpointenergy.com/>

TRAFFIC ISSUES

When a resident reports that someone has run a stop sign or is speeding, refer them to the local police department's non-emergency number. We can't control the way people drive but we can be understanding of the residents concern and listen. Referring them to local law enforcement is the only suggestion we can make.

RESIDENT CORNER

Park Lakes Pools/ Splash Pad

Please note the Pool & Splash Pad is now officially closed for the 2018 season.

Access Gates Reminder

Residents if you are continuing to have issues with your EZ-Tag or access card, please call or stop by the office to have your information verified. You may also email your information to isis@sterlingasi.com.

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

For your convenience our drop box is located at the Clubhouse.

PARK LAKES

HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Park Lakes Property Owners Association

Sterling Association Services Inc.(832) 678-4500
 SplashPad Texas Onsite Office.....(281) 441-3557
 Recreation Center Onsite Office.....(281) 441-9955
 Gate Attendant.....(281) 441-1089

Utilities

Comcast (Customer Service)(713) 341-1000
 Electricity (TXU)(800) 368-1398
 Gas (Centerpoint)(713) 659-2111
 Trash (Republic Waste).....(281) 446-2030
 Water & Sewer (EDP Water District).....(832) 467-1599
 Electricity (Centerpoint-Report street light outage)(713) 207-2222
 Texas One Call System (Call Before you Dig)..... 811

Property Tax Authorities

Harris County Tax.....(713) 368-2000
 Harris MUD #400.....(281) 353-9809

Public Services

US Post Office.....(281) 540-1775
 Toll Road EZ Tag.....(281) 875-3279
 Voters/Auto Registration(713) 368-2000
 Drivers License Information.....(281) 446-3391
 Humble Area Chamber(281) 446-2128

Police & Fire

Emergency 911
 Constable/Precinct 4 (24-hr dispatch)(281) 376-3472
 Harris Co. Sheriff's Dept./Prec 4, Dist 2 (24-hr) (713) 221-6000
 Eastex Fire Department.....(281) 441-2244
 Emergency Medical Service (281) 446-7889
 Poison Control.....(800) 222-1222
 Humble Animal Control.....(281) 446-2327
 Texas DPS.....(281) 446-3391

Area Hospitals

Renaissance Northeast Surgery(281) 446-4053
 Kingwood Medical Center(281) 348-8000
 Northeast Medical Center Hospital.....(281) 540-7700
 Memorial Hermann Hospital (The Woodlands)(281) 364-2300

Public Schools

Humble ISD(281) 641-1000
 Park Lakes Elementary (K-6).....(281) 641-3200
 Humble Middle School (7-8)(281) 641-4000
 Summer Creek High School (9-12).....(281) 641-5400

Private Schools

Holy Trinity(281) 459-4323
 St. Mary Magdalene Catholic.....(281) 446-8535
 The Christian School of Kingwood(281) 359-4929
 Humble Christian School.....(281) 441-1313

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The Association doesn't verify, endorse, or approve any products, information, or opinions mentioned at Association sponsored functions or contain in this community newsletter.

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A Focus on Influenza: What You Should Know About the Flu

By Concentra Urgent Care



The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccination each year. Every year in the United States, on average:

- 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu
- More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications
- About 36,000 people die from flu

Some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk for serious flu complications.

Complications of flu

Complications of flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.

How flu spreads

Flu viruses spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Apparently healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to five days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

Key facts about seasonal flu vaccine

The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year. There are two types of vaccines:

The “flu shot”: an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given with a needle, usually in the arm. The flu shot is approved for use in people older than 6 months, including healthy people and people with chronic medical conditions.

The nasal-spray flu vaccine: a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses that do not cause the flu (sometimes called LAIV for “Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine”). LAIV is approved for use in healthy

people two to 49 years of age who are not pregnant. The viruses in the vaccine change each year based on international surveillance and scientists’ estimations about which types and strains of viruses will circulate in a given year. About two weeks after vaccination, enough antibodies build up to provide protection against the influenza virus.

Symptoms of the flu

- Fever (usually high)
- Headache
- Fatigue (can be extreme)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Diarrhea and vomiting (more common among children than adults)

Having these symptoms does not always mean that you have the flu. Many different illnesses, including the common cold, can have similar symptoms.

Diagnosing the flu

It is very difficult to distinguish the flu from other infections on the basis of symptoms alone. A doctor’s exam may be needed to tell whether you have developed the flu or a complication of the flu. There are tests that can determine if you have the flu as long as you are tested within the first two or three days of illness.

If you develop flu-like symptoms and are concerned about your illness, especially if you are at high risk for complications of the flu, you should consult your health care provider. Those at high risk for complications include people 65 years or older, people with chronic medical conditions, pregnant women, and young children.

Good health habits for flu prevention

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated each year, but good health habits like covering your mouth when you cough and washing your hands often can help prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu. There also are flu antiviral drugs that can be used to treat and prevent the flu.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- Clean your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth due to the spread of germs.
- Practice other good health habits:
 - Get plenty of sleep
 - Be physically active
 - Manage your stress
 - Drink plenty of fluids
 - Eat nutritious food

Excluding Pests



When the weather turns towards autumn and leads into winter, many pests start looking for a cozy place which can often lead them inside your home. By performing a thorough inspection, you can locate areas where these pests may enter and stop them before they become a problem.

Inside the home, look around doors and windows and if you see light around them it's a sign there isn't a good seal and weather stripping should be replaced. Inspect the attic for holes or entry points for small mammals such as rats, mice, and squirrels. Attic vents should be covered with stainless steel screening to block animals from entering. Outside, inspect the perimeter of the home for cracks and crevices in the foundation that should be sealed. Locate pipe and wire penetrations that enter the structure and seal areas that allow pests to enter.

Ideas on how to exclude pests from your home:

- Trim back or prune any trees and shrubs that touch or overhang the home
- Seal pipe & wire penetrations with copper mesh, sealant, or expanding foam

- Replace weather stripping around doors and windows if there is not a good seal
- Repair or replace window screens with holes
- For homes with brick or stone facades, stuff weep holes with copper mesh
- Clean debris from gutters to reduce harborage areas for pests
- Inspect all furniture, boxes, and bags for pests before carrying them into the home
- Inspect all plants for insect pests before bringing them into the home
- Do not store firewood inside the home, against outside walls, or near doors
- Use sheet metal, hardware cloth, or steel wool to seal any areas where animals have chewed to enter the home**

**make sure animal is not in the home or you'll seal it inside!

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at:

www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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THREE BILLION LOST

By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center

Recently, the journal *Science* published a study showing that we have lost more than 1 in 4 birds from the United States and Canada since 1970. That's 3 billion! The study was conducted by scientists at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology along with six other institutions. "Birds are excellent indicators of environmental health. Severe declines in common birds, like those shown in this study, tell us something is wrong and underscores the need to become better stewards of the planet," said Dr. Nicole Michel, senior quantitative ecologist with Audubon.

The study doesn't address why we're losing birds in such great numbers but as with many wildlife species, habitat loss has to be at the top of the list. Other reasons are as follows:

- The use of pesticides – it is estimated that the United States uses 20% of all pesticides used globally every year. That's a staggering 1.2 billion pounds. Pesticides are used for agricultural purposes, forest and rangeland management and golf courses. They are also used in and around our homes.

- Climate change – Audubon conducted a study of 588 bird species and discovered that more than half are in trouble. Three hundred fourteen bird species will lose more than half of their climatic range

by 2080. To read the full report, go to <https://climate.audubon.org>.

- Cats – According to a study by the Smithsonian Conservatory Biology Institute, over 2.4 billion birds are killed by cats, both pets and feral, in the U.S. every year.

- Collisions - windows, wind turbines, and other structures. According to the American Bird Conservancy, up to one billion birds die every year in the US when they hit windows and other structures. The Smithsonian estimates that wind turbines account for up to 328,000 bird deaths annually.

So what can we do to be better stewards of the environment? Use organic pesticides. Keep your pet cats indoors. In some cities and communities it is illegal to let your pet cat roam free outside. Use decals or tape on your windows to prevent bird collisions. These are just a few of the many things we can do to help our environment. Let's all learn to live in harmony with the animals we share our world with.

TWRC Wildlife Center is a 40-year-old non-profit organization located in Houston. Over 5,000 ill, injured, or orphaned animals are brought to us every year in need of medical care. Be sure to follow us on Facebook and refer to our website for helpful wildlife information—www.twrcwildlifecenter.org.



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Parker House Rolls

Level: Intermediate

Total: 2 hr 45 min

Prep: 20 min

Inactive: 2 hr

Cook: 25 min

Yield: about 24 rolls

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups milk

1 stick unsalted butter, cut into pieces, plus more for brushing

1/2 cup sugar

1 package active dry yeast

1/2 cup warm water

3 large eggs, lightly beaten

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

6 cups all-purpose flour

Directions:

-Place milk in a small saucepan and bring to a simmer. Remove from the heat, stir in the butter and sugar and let cool.

-Dissolve yeast in warm water and let sit until foamy. Combine milk mixture, eggs, yeast, salt, and 1/2 of the flour in a mixer with the dough attachment and mix until smooth.

-Add the remaining flour, 1/2 cup at a time, and stir until a smooth ball forms. Remove from the bowl and knead by hand on a floured surface for about 5 minutes.

-Place in greased bowl, cover, and let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk, about 60 to 70 minutes.

-On a floured surface, punch down the dough and shape into desired shapes.

-Place on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Cover again and let rise until doubled, about 30 to 40 minutes.

-Preheat the oven 350 degrees F. Bake for about 20 minutes or until golden brown.

-Remove from the oven and brush with melted butter before serving.



SHEDDING LIGHT ON NEW BULBS



Standard incandescent light bulbs may soon become a thing of the past. Under the Clean Energy Act of 2007, required the sale of energy-inefficient incandescent bulbs to be phased out over a two-year period, beginning with 100-watt bulbs in January 2012. Compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) have become the most popular replacement choice. The typical CFL uses 66 percent less energy and lasts up to ten times longer than an incandescent bulb.

Making the switch to CFLs doesn't require that you throw out all your incandescent bulbs right away. Even a gradual change can result in significant savings. Just replacing your home's five most frequently used light fixtures can save you more than \$65 each year, as CFLs provide the most savings when a lighting source is used for at least two hours a day. You can continue to use incandescent bulbs for fixtures that are only on for a few minutes at a time, such as closet lights, changing to CFLs as your supply of incandescent bulbs runs out.

One important point to know about CFLs is that they contain an average of 4 milligrams of mercury (about the amount that would cover the tip of a ballpoint pen). The mercury is sealed within the bulb's glass tubing, and no mercury is released when the bulb is intact or use. Special caution must be taken when disposing of used bulbs or cleaning up broken bulbs, however. Some states require used CFL bulbs (broken and unbroken) to be taken to local recycling centers for disposal. And if a bulb breaks in your home, you should follow the Environmental Protection Agency's guidelines to clean up the debris:

Before Clean-up: Air Out the Room

- Have people and pets leave the room, and don't let anyone walk through the breakage area on their way out.
- Open a window and leave the room for 15 minutes or more.
- Shut off the central forced-air heating/air conditioning system, if you have one.

Clean-Up Steps for Hard Surfaces

- Carefully scoop up glass pieces and powder using stiff paper or cardboard and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.

- Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass fragments and powder.

- Wipe the area clean with damp paper towels or disposable wet wipes. Place towels in the glass jar or plastic bag.

- Do not use a vacuum or broom to clean up the broken bulb on hard surfaces.

Clean-up Steps for Carpeting or Rug

- Carefully pick up glass fragments and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.

- Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass fragments and powder.

- If vacuuming is needed after all visible materials are removed, vacuum the area where the bulb was broken.

- Remove the vacuum bag (or empty and wipe the canister), and put the bag or vacuum debris in a sealed plastic bag.

Clean-up Steps for Clothing, Bedding and Other Soft Materials

- If clothing or bedding materials come in direct contact with broken glass or mercury-containing powder from inside the bulb that may stick to the fabric, the clothing or bedding should be thrown away. Do not wash such clothing or bedding because mercury fragments in the clothing may contaminate the machine and/or pollute sewage.

- You can, however, wash clothing or other materials that have been exposed to the mercury vapor from a broken CFL, such as the clothing you are wearing when you cleaned up the broken CFL, as long as that clothing has not come into direct contact with the materials from the broken bulb.

- If shoes come into direct contact with broken glass or mercury-containing powder from the bulb, wipe them off with damp paper towels or disposable wet wipes. Place the towels or wipes in a glass jar or plastic bag for disposal.

Disposal of Clean-up Materials

- Immediately place all clean-up materials outdoors in a trash container or protected area for the next normal trash pickup.

- Wash your hands after disposing of the jars or plastic bags containing clean-up materials.

- Check with your local or state government about disposal requirements in your specific area. Some states do not allow such trash disposal. Instead, they require that broken and unbroken mercury-containing bulbs be taken to a local recycling center.

Future Cleaning of Carpeting or Rug: Air Out the Room During and After Vacuuming

- The next several times you vacuum, shut off the central forced-air heating/air conditioning system and open a window before vacuuming.

- Keep the central heating/air conditioning system shut off and the window open for at least 15 minutes after vacuuming is completed.



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