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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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Warm spring days mean area farmers flock to the fields on their tractors, preparing the land and planting for the fall harvest. An emphasis on safety while on the machinery can save lives.

Farm safety big concern in spring

Springtime is here and farming is in high gear. It's time to consider steps to make this a safe season for farmers and farm families. Some statistics to consider include:

- An estimated 350 to 450 fatalities are due to tractor incidents.
- Thousands of injuries and millions of dollars are lost due to property damage, medical bills, time off from work, reduced productivity, and added insurance costs.
- Farm machinery deaths were the leading cause of death, accounting for 36 percent of deaths of youth age 20 or less. In a study from Purdue University, 2 year-olds were

most often victims of fatal accidents. Among children 5 and under, runovers were the leading cause of death. Thirty percent of machinery related deaths occurred in this age group. Rollovers accounted for 40 percent of deaths for children ages 12-17. Entanglements, especially power takeoffs accounted for 12 percent of deaths. Most farm accidents occur at dusk, between 6 and 7 p.m.

- Machinery is the leading cause of farm deaths in 29 states.

Modern farm tractors incorporate several features which make them much safer to operate. Of most importance is the roll-over protective structure

(ROPS) and the seat belt. When these devices and common sense are used, many accidents can be prevented. When operating a tractor, remember to:

- Securely fasten your seatbelt if the tractor has a ROPS.
- Where possible, avoid operating the tractor near ditches, embankments, and holes. If this can't be avoided, use caution in these situations.
- Reduce speed when turning and on rough, slick, or muddy surfaces.
- Stay off slopes too steep for operation.
- Watch where you are going, especially at row ends, on roads, and around trees.

- Do not permit passengers.
- Be sure everyone is clear before moving.
- Operate the tractor smoothly- no jerky turns, starts, or stops.
- Hitch only to the drawbar and hitch points recommended by the manufacturer.
- When the tractor is stopped, set brakes securely and use the park lock if available.
- Remove the keys.
- Train young people to operate tractors properly, not only to physically manipulate the machine, but to recognize hazards and know how to avoid them.

Warm weather brings mosquitoes, threat of West Nile

Health officials offer tips on avoiding virus

Warm weather is here, and so, too the mosquitoes return.

Albemarle Health Services' Health Director Jerry Parks, MPH, said people in the area should take steps to reduce mosquitoes breeding on their properties.

Regional Health Services' Health Director Jerry Parks, MPH, said people in the area should take steps to reduce mosquitoes breeding on their properties.

The fight to protect public health from West Nile Virus is upon us once again.

Flowerpots and trays can collect water from rains or from watering, and provide mosquitoes with an environment conducive to breeding. Take the containers inside or empty the water every few days.

Empty and clean your pets' water and food dishes at least once a week. Piles of leaves or other debris in low-lying areas can also hold enough water for mosquito larvae to develop and should be removed.

People should also alert local health officials to potential mosquito breeding sites in their areas, such as

"The fight to protect public health from West Nile Virus is upon us once again," said Parks. "Reducing mosquito populations helps reduce West Nile infections. We're asking people to take steps to remove mosquito breeding sites, to help address the problem before it starts."

West Nile Virus is carried by birds and transmitted to people through mosquito bites. The virus was first detected in the United States in 1999 and made its way to North Carolina in 200. The virus may cause headaches, swollen glands, muscle aches and rashes; in severe cases it may also cause an infection of the brain called encephalitis or even death. People over age 50 and those with compromised immune systems are at a greater risk of becoming seriously ill when infected with West Nile Virus.

"State and local officials have already begun active surveillance and control programs, but citizens can be a tremendous help in our efforts to prevent the spread of West Nile Virus and other mosquito-borne illnesses," said Parks.

As the weather warms, residents should look around their properties and eliminate areas where standing water can collect. Mosquitoes can breed in very small quantities of water, and breeding will be soon, as the weather continues to warm. Mosquito breeding sites are easier to spot before plants develop leaves that could screen the sites from view.

Tip or toss standing water in artificial and natural containers which create ideal breeding areas for mosquitoes including swimming pool covers and other tarpaulins. Adjust pool covers and tarps so they will not retain water, or check and empty them every few days.

Clean rain gutters and spouting. Fallen leaves can clog gutters and spouting, allowing water to collect when it rains.

Repair leaky outdoor faucets, fill in potholes and puddles, and remove old tires. Completely rinse, clean or empty birdbaths and containers.

clogged storm sewers, ditches and abandoned properties with standing water.

Albemarle Regional Health Services has an active, aggressive West Nile Virus surveillance and control program again this year. The Environmental Health Specialists Team led by Walker Rayburn works closely with the Vector Management Program, and have taken steps that will help the communities if and when West Nile Virus surfaces.

People should reduce the risk of mosquito contacts by using mosquito repellent containing DEET when outdoors. Mosquitoes are most active during sunrise, sunset and dusk/early evening hours. Use the repellents carefully by following label directions and observe young children frequently when outside. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors during peak mosquito activity periods.

For more information, visit the Public Health Pest Management web site at <http://www.NCWNV.com> or contact them by telephone at (919) 733-6407. The Division of Public Health web site can be viewed at <http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi.oee/wnv.html>. To reach the Department of Environmental Health, Albemarle Regional Health Services, call 338-4490.

Hertford Council okays Transitional Districts

Hertford Town Council approved expansion of Transitional Residential Districts near the downtown area last Monday night.

The move will allow for more business uses in residential areas.

Permitted uses in the districts are bed and breakfast and daycare.

Existing conditional uses in the zone are art gallery, barber and beauty shops, churches, clubs and

fraternal organizations, fire stations, florist and gift shops, group homes, hobby and craft shops, home occupations, libraries, museum, professional and business offices, photography studios, public parks and recreation, restaurants and antique shops.

Council also added provisions to allow outdoor food service; retail food stores to include bakeries, candy stores, fruit and vegetable sales and other mis-

cellaneous food stores engaged in the retail sale of specialized foods; and recreation/sporting sales, rentals, and service to include non-motorized boat rentals and sales and limited outdoor storage; recreational boat slips that are rented or leased to someone other than the property owner and the boat is not used for commercial purposes; sale, rental and repair of bicycles with limited outdoor storage and

any other non-motorized recreational sales and rentals.

Owners of proposed businesses must apply to the town to make sure they are in compliance with the zoning ordinance. Those requesting conditional use permits must also go before the Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustments. That board sets requirements based on ordinances and impact on neighboring properties.

150th anniversary

Hertford Baptist celebrates

On April 25, Hertford Baptist Church will celebrate 150 years as a constituted church. The theme is, "Celebrating God's Faithfulness." The celebration begins on Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Dinner, provided by Captain Bob's, will immediately follow with an afternoon reflection and special music.

Rev. Charles Bullard of Asheboro, former pastor, will be the guest preacher. Special music will be presented by HBC choirs and Rev. Wallace Phillips, former member and present

pastor of The Carpenter's Shop in Ahoskie.

In the afternoon reflection, several testimonies will be shared by those who have either served through HBC or gone out to other ministerial callings. Some of these sharing are Dr. Howard Roberson, Rev. Wallace Phillips, Rev. Joey Hobbs and others. A special letter from Rev. S. Keith Vaughn will also be shared.

The three day 150th Anniversary Revival will follow the day of celebration Monday - Wednesday at 7 p.m. The mother church of Hertford, Bethel Baptist; the grandmother church, Yeopium Baptist; and daughter churches First Baptist of Hertford and Burgess Baptist have been invited to share in these services.

HPD quarterly report

The Hertford Police Department released its quarterly report at the Hertford Town Council meeting last Monday night.

During the first three months of the year, officers made 24 arrests, and completed 65 incident reports and 154 operational reports.

The eight officers issued 96 state and 31 town traffic citations during the period. Twenty-seven of the town citations and 48 of the state citations were for speeding.

Controlling speeding through Hertford's streets has been a concern of council over the

past several months.

Council has also instructed the police department to try to rid the town of junk vehicles. The department tagged 70 junk vehicles, had 26 people comply with the town ordinances and towed 23 vehicles. The county also tagged four vehicles. There are still 17 cases being worked.

Thirty-five accidents were investigated. In addition officers served 129 subpoenas.

Increasing foot patrol has also been a council priority. Officers logged 484 hours of foot patrol during the three-month period.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
 High: 83
 Low: 59
 PARTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
 High: 76
 Low: 57
 PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
 High: 74
 Low: 50
 ISOLATED T'STORMS