

# BEAR in MIND

UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHERN COLORADO

January 2021

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 1

## Safety/Fire Focus

### Fire Safety

Cooking is one of the most common causes of fires in a residence. Even at UNC, fire alarms occur. Usually, the alarm is caused by unattended cooking that is forgotten and ends up burning. This can cause smoke to fill the area. However, this doesn't just happen at UNC, according to fire officials, roughly 5 out of 6 fires in residence halls throughout the U.S. begin by cooking. From 2011–2015, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 4,100 structure fires in dorms, fraternities, sororities, and other campus related properties per year. These fires caused an estimated \$14 million in direct property damage, not to mention the inconvenience caused by the displacement of residents.

Fortunately, below are some cooking safety tips that can be used to prevent fires, setting off alarms, and relocating residents.

- Stay in the kitchen while cooking. Do not leave cooking unattended.
- Be sure to keep a lid nearby to smother grease fires. Never put a grease fire out with water.
- Make sure to cook only when alert, not sleepy or drowsy. Most dorm fire incidents occur between the hours of 5 pm to 11 pm.
- Keep the cooking area clean and uncluttered.
- If an open fire does happen first, simply turn off the heat, by turning off the source.
- Keep the door closed. By keeping the door closed, this will help contain the fire.



Arlington Park Apartment Fire, November 2015



By following the above recommendations, you can help keep yourself and other residents safe and prevent costly damage.

For more information on cooking safety visit:

[National Fire Protection Association](#)

[Campus Fire Safety](#)

[UNC Housing and Residential Education Student Handbook](#)

UNC Cooking Fire, April 2017

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### Dates to Remember

**January 11**– Spring Semester Begins

**January 18**– Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Campus Closed)

**February 15**– Presidents' Day (Campus Open)

**March 14**–Daylight Saving Time Begins

**March 15-19**– Spring Break

**March 17** –Saint Patrick's Day

### Safe Thought

**“Safety by Choice,  
Not by Chance”**

## Winter Safety Tips

Winter can be very unpredictable, especially living in Colorado where it can go from 70 degrees and sunny to a blizzard in a matter of hours. The following are some winter safety tips that can help keep you and others safe.

### Driver Safety

- Avoid using cruise control
- Steer in the direction of a skid
- Accelerate and decelerate slowly
- Increase following distance



### Prepare your car

- Check your tires and replace them if necessary. Ensure proper air pressure.
- Keep the gas tank full to avoid ice from getting in the tank and fuel lines
- Ensure windshield washer fluid is rated for winter temperatures
- Keep an emergency kit in the vehicle. Include water, snacks, first-aid kit, blankets, flashlight, extra batteries, a portable cell phone charger and emergency flares.

### Prepare for Outdoor Activities

- Wear layers of light and warm clothing, a wind-resistant coat, waterproof shoes, hat and gloves
- Work slowly when engaging in outdoor tasks, such as shoveling or removing snow from a vehicle



### Prevent falls this winter

- Choose the correct footwear. Shoes and boots should have a sole with good traction
- Leave early. Falls are more likely to happen when in a rush. Allow plenty of time.
- Walk like a penguin. Take short steps and walk as flat-footed as possible on icy or slippery surfaces.
- Keep hands free. You'll need them to help with balancing. Avoid carrying heavy loads and keep those hands out of pockets.

For additional information on winter driving preparedness, Colorado winter driving laws and road information visit the [Colorado Department of Transportation Winter Driving](#).

## EnviroHealth

### E-waste Disposal

Electronic waste or more commonly known as E-waste are electronic products nearing the end of their useful life. Items like computers, televisions, DVDs, VCRs, stereos, copiers and cell phones are some of the most common e-waste. Many of these products can be reused, refurbished, or recycled.

While modern electronics are safe to use and be around, most electronics contain some form of toxic materials, including beryllium, cadmium, mercury and lead, which pose serious environmental risks to our soil, water, air and wildlife. When E-waste gets buried at a landfill, it leaches into the ground effecting the ground water and nearby environment.



On July 1, 2013, the State of Colorado passed the "Electronic Recycling Jobs Act". This prohibits the disposal of e-waste in Colorado solid waste landfills.

University computers that are no longer in service should be turned into the Information Management and Technology (IMT) Department. IMT will assess electronic and computer equipment prior to disposal. For personal e-waste, visit the [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment](#) for a list of certified electronic recyclers in Colorado.



## Daylight Savings Begins

On March 14, 2021 daylight saving time will begin and clocks should be set forward one hour. Daylight saving time was started during World War I to conserve energy and use as much daylight as possible. People continue to change clocks twice a year to keep with this tradition. Most digital clocks will reset themselves, but remember to change manual devices and spring forward.

## Stormwater

One of the most important tools to combat environmental degradation is education. This is true for both global and local concerns. The quality of water in our rivers, lakes, and oceans is a critical environmental issue that starts at a local level, but collectively, becomes a global issue – and can be substantially improved through education.

The degradation of stormwater is the number one contributor to surface water pollution in the United States. Only through a collective effort between government agencies, industry, and the general public can this issue be mitigated. Many pollutants discharged to surface waters by the general public can be attributed to lack of awareness. For example, many people think that whatever goes down a storm drain is treated by a water treatment facility. This is not true, whatever goes down the storm drain ends up in our rivers, lakes, and oceans. Because of this misconception, people will dump oil, chemicals, trash, and yard waste into storm drains. Remember, there is a proper way to dispose of all of these items. Bag and dispose of your trash in a proper receptacle, oil and chemicals can be disposed of at county household hazardous waste drop off sites and lawn waste can be composted or recycled.

Lack of awareness can also cause harm to our surface waters without realizing it. Over fertilizing lawns and not cleaning up yard waste can cause algae blooms in local waterbodies, which starve other plants and animals of oxygen. In the winter, overuse of salts and deicers can runoff into waterways which can kill plants and animals. Not cleaning up dog waste can introduce E. Coli into the watershed.

Everyone is an active participant in preventing stormwater pollution, whether it is actively making sure that pollutants don't make it to the storm drain or educating others, we all have a responsibility. Visit the [City of Greeley Stormwater Division](#) for more information and stormwater pollution reporting.



## Health and Wellness

### Blood Donor Month

The new year is upon us and January is National Blood Donor Month. The COVID-19 pandemic has created a critical blood shortage in the U.S. It's not due to COVID-19 patients needing blood products. Rather, it's a lack of donations coming in during the pandemic. Medical facilities are used to having a one to two week blood inventory but now, many areas of the country, medical facilities have a one to two day supply of blood.

The American Association of Blood Banks and the American Red Cross are celebrating National Blood Donor Month in January 2021 to encourage donors to give or pledge to give blood. In the United States about 39,000 units of blood are needed by hospitals and emergency facilities to accommodate the need for fresh blood. This blood is used when dealing with many different types of diseases, organ transplant recipients, and other medical uses.

If you are at least 17 years of age or weigh a minimum of 110 pounds you are eligible to donate blood. Everyone is encouraged to donate and help out a good cause that could save someone's life when they are in need of blood. Save a life and donate today!



For more local information on times and places to donate blood visit [Red Cross Blood](#) or call 1-800-RED-CROSS.

## Staying Active

2020 has been a year of uncertainties, and because of this, many of us have had to modify the way we live to adapt to life in a pandemic. With all the changes in our daily life, we should remember to keep our bodies moving. Even with social distancing and maintaining mask orders, it is important to get up and move. There are many benefits to a daily exercise routine ranging from weight control, managing blood sugar, insulin levels, muscle gain, and increased bone strength. However, one of the most important benefits of regular exercise is that it improves our mental health. During exercise, a body releases chemicals that can improve your mood and make a body feel more relaxed. This in turn will help deal with daily stress and improve our sense of well-being. So, how will you make exercise part of your daily routine in 2021?



There are a few ways that an individual can incorporate more activity into a daily routine without going to a gym.

- Making everyday actives more active is a good way to start, even just small changes can be very beneficial.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park further away from your destination.
- Make exercise more fun. Try listening to music or watching tv during a workout. It also helps to have a group of friends that also want to work out. Workout buddies help keep you accountable and give you a reason to exercise.
- Have a mini competition with the people that you work out with.

When picking a workout routine, it is important to remember there is no cookie-cutter method, what works for one person might not work for you. If you aren't sure how to begin, the UNC Recreation Center is a good place to start. Trained staff, at the UNC Recreation Center, offer personal training and multiple options. They have facilities, activities, and services for individuals at every level. A personal trainer can help find the right method based on your needs, that will bring you the most success. You may also want to consult a physician before beginning activities.

Be active at home during #COVID19 outbreak

- Online exercise classes
- Dancing
- Playing active video games
- Jumping rope
- Muscle strength and balance training

#BeActive      #HealthyAtHome

World Health Organization

Bear in Mind (BIM) is a publication brought to you by your campus Environmental Health and Safety Department (EHS). We are interested in your thoughts and submissions. Contact the [Environmental Health and Safety](#) department at 970-351-1149. Suggestions can also be sent by campus mail attention EHS, Campus Box 57. Bear in Mind issues are published every quarter. Find current and archived issues on-line at the [EHS Website](#).

It is the mission of the Environmental Health and Safety Department to support university functions by promoting a safe and healthy campus environment for students, faculty, , staff and visitors, as well as to provide professional guidance and direction toward compliance with University, Federal, State and local rules and regulations.



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