

Webster County Acreage Living



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Sidewalk Deicers

Information provided by *Shawn Shouse, ISU Extension Field Specialist/Ag Engineering*

Deicers work by dissolving into the ice and lowering the freezing point so the ice turns to water or slush even at temperatures well below 32 degrees.

Deicers work best when used in combination with scraping and shoveling. Use the deicer to melt through the ice and soften it from the bottom. Then use a scraper or shovel to remove the ice from the sidewalk.

For melting through layers of ice, the shape of the deicer granules makes a difference. Round pellets about the size of these circles (○), 1/16 to 3/16 inches in diameter, melt through ice faster than irregular shapes, flakes, or powder.

Five types of chemical deicers are commonly used, often times in mixtures.

1. SODIUM CHLORIDE (common

rock salt) has been used for years. It is fairly inexpensive, but not as effective as other chemicals. Sodium chloride is very corrosive to steel and concrete, and it can burn plants where the ice is pushed aside.

2. CALCIUM CHLORIDE: is a different form of salt. As it dissolves in water, a chemical reaction gives off heat. This property makes it effective at much lower temperatures than other deicers.
3. POTASSIUM CHLORIDE salt is more likely to harm plants than other deicers.
4. UREA FERTILIZER (made from ammonia and carbon dioxide) is less likely to damage plants than potassium chloride, but may cause excessive plant growth

along the edges of sidewalks and driveways.

5. CALCIUM MAGNESIUM ACETATE (CMA) is a salt-free melting agent made from limestone and acetic acid. CMA has little impact on plants and is used on bridges and environmentally sensitive areas.

You can minimize damage to concrete and plants by using deicers sparingly and removing ice as soon as it is loose. Always read and follow label directions when using any product, including deicers.

What about sand? While sand does not melt ice, it does improve your footing while the ice is there. Mixtures of sand and deicers can be very effective in making your sidewalk and driveway safer.

Longevity of Perennials

Information provided by *Richard Jauron, ISUE Horticulture*

When you are selecting perennials for the home landscape, it is important to consider their size, bloom period, cultural requirements and their longevity.

It is not uncommon to see 50- to 60-year-old peonies in Iowa. If given proper growing conditions and good care, long-lived perennials often

persist for 20 or more years.

List of Long-lived Perennials:

- Lady's Mantle
- Butterfly Weed
- Snakeroot
- Ferns
- Hardy Geraniums
- Ornamental Grasses
- Daylily

- Hosta
- Siberian Iris
- Daffodil
- Peony
- Lungwort
- Black-eyed Susan
- Blazing Star
- Balloon Flower
- False Blue Indigo



Smart Uses for a Tax Refund

Information provided by Barb Wollan, ISUE Family Life Management Field Specialist

A tax refund is always a welcome bonus. Whether it's \$300 or \$3,000, the way you use that money can have a real impact on your personal and financial well-being.

New computer? New recliner? Nice vacation? Those are all great ideas. But before you spend the money, try to think through all the options - even the ones that aren't especially exciting or glamorous.

Consider three general rules:

1. **DO** plan ahead before spending your refund. Without a plan, you may use the money on the first important thing that comes to mind, and then later realize some-

thing else was more important. Planning ahead and involving the family increases the chances you will identify all the possibilities, and think about which are most important.

2. **DO** devote a portion of your tax refund to build long-term financial security.
3. **DON'T** throw away part of your refund on loan fees. Did you know that those companies that offer "quick refunds" are just giving you a loan?

It feels great to make good use of your tax refund. You can experience that same sense of accomplishment all year 'round!

First Aid Kits for Your Acreage

Information provided by ISUE Publication Safe Farm—Farm Emergency & First Aid Kits, PM 1563k

Although farm-related injuries vary according to season and type of operation, the three most common causes are live-stock, machinery, and slips or falls. More than half of all farm injuries (65 percent) in Iowa are caused by these hazards.

Responding to farm injuries is critical. Certain conditions can turn a minor injury into a life-threatening situation before professional medical treatment is available. Being prepared for medical emergencies and knowing the basics of first response can help minimize the extent of injuries.

Preparation includes having the right materials available. Keep in mind the following tips as you put together your farm emergency/first aid kit.

- **Know what's in the kit and how to use it.** Get appropriate training and renew periodically. Take refresher courses.
- **Have more than one first aid kit.** Consider developing several kits specific to the hazards and potential injury. For example, a first aid kit for the barn would contain different supplies than the kit you keep on your tractor in the spring.
- **Pack items for individual needs.** Make sure your emergency kit contains personal medical information and supplies for those with special medical conditions. A bee sting to someone who is allergic to bee venom could be life threatening. The name and telephone number of a family doctor for everyone who might be

involved in a medical emergency should be included in each kit.

- **Always include emergency numbers.** Include phone numbers of ambulance, hospital, or fire department, and have written directions about how to get to the home, field or work area.
- **Remember communication and heat.** Flares and a flashlight will help you signal for help if you're caught after dark or in an insulated area. Don't forget to pack matches (water-proof). Flares can also generate heat until help arrives.
- **Check your kits every three months.** Inspect for expired supplies. Replace items that are dusty. Make sure supplies fit the season.
- **Pack Red Cross manual or first aid chart.** This information is invaluable during a crisis when it's difficult to think clearly. These items list necessary steps to care for victims of various events, such as drowning, shock, fractures, or burns, and how to avoid additional injury.
- **Label all kits.** Store in a large nylon travel or sports bag with a visible label.

First aid manuals and a basic course of instruction are available from your local chapter of the American Red Cross.



Chocolate Myths

Information provided by Paulelda Gilbert, ISU Extension Health & Nutrition Field Specialist & Communicating Food for Health, February 2000

Do you feel guilty eating chocolate? Well don't. Chocolate, as it turns out, isn't a food to feel guilty about eating in moderation.

Here are some common myths about chocolate.

- **Myth #1 – Chocolate is as harmful as butter.** Truth – Chocolate does contain the same amount of saturated fat as butter.
- **Myth #2 – Chocolate is high in caffeine.** Truth – the amount of caffeine in a 1.3 ounce chocolate bar is about the same as the caffeine in a cup of decaffeinated coffee, less than 10 mg. (A 6 oz. cup of coffee contains over 100 mg of caffeine.)

- **Myth #3 – Chocolate causes hyperactivity.** Truth – Research has shown for years that sugar does not cause hyperactivity, and this includes chocolate.
- **Myth #4 – Nothing about chocolate is healthy.** Truth – A study published in the Lancet reported that chocolate contains relatively high amounts of phenolic compounds, which possess antioxidant properties.

The Bottom Line: An occasional chocolate treat is OK as long as you fit it into a high-fiber, low-fat eating and exercise plan.



Late February through March Gardening Tips

Information provided by ISUE Publication, Seasonal Garden Tips, RG 105

Fruits:

- Prune grapevines. We recommend you look at publications RG 502—Pruning Grapevines and PM 1707—Growing Grapes in the Home Garden.
- Remove all weak, diseased, or damaged canes of summer and fall-bearing raspberries at ground level. We recommend you look at publication RG 501—Pruning Raspberries.
- Prune apple trees. We recommend you look at publication PM 780—Pruning and Training Fruit Trees.

Trees & Shrubs:

- Check for rabbit damage.
- Prune deciduous trees. We recommend that you look at PM 1304—Pruning Shade and Flowering Trees.
- Put cut branches of magnolia, crabapple, and forsythia in vases for forcing blooms indoors.

Flowers:

- Start seeds of petunia, snapdragon, impatiens, and salvia indoors.

Herbs:

- Use the herbs you dried/stored for sauces and soups.

Houseplants:

- Continue watering amaryllis, poinsettia, and holiday cactus after flowers fade. We recommend you look at publications RG 309—Poinsettia Care and RG 328—Growing Amaryllis.

Vegetables:

- Start seeds indoors of broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower 5 to 6 weeks before April planting date. We recommend you look at publication PM 874—Starting Garden Transplants at Home.
- Start seeds of eggplant, peppers, and tomatoes 8 weeks before planting in mid-May.



Magic Chocolate Pudding Cake

Recipe modified from Better Homes and Gardens, New Cook Book.

Cake: 1 cup all-purpose flour; ½ cup sugar; 2 Tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder; 2 teaspoons baking powder; ½ teaspoon salt; ½ cup fat free milk; 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil; & 1 teaspoon vanilla. **Pudding:** ¾ cup sugar; ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder; & 1 ½ cups boiling water.

Cake: In a large mixing bowl stir together flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. Add milk, oil and vanilla. Stir until smooth. Spread into an ungreased 8 inch square baking pan. **Pudding:** Combine sugar and cocoa powder. Gradually stir in boiling water. Pour liquid mixture evenly over batter in pan. Bake at 350°F. for 30 minutes. Serve warm or chilled plain or with fat free frozen vanilla yogurt and a red fruit (frozen is fine) such as strawberries, red raspberries, or cherries. Serves 8.

Frequent Questions asked during the months of February & March

Q. What dates are left for Private Pesticide Application Training in and around Webster County?

- A. February 8th, 9:30 a.m. at the Community Building, Bode. *(Please call the Humboldt Co. Extension 515-332- 2201).*
February 18th, 7:00 p.m. at the Webster Co. Extension Office *(Please call 515-576-2119).*
March 5th, 9:30 a.m. at the Rialto Theater, Pocahontas. *(Please call the Pocahontas Co. Extension 877-595-1003).*
March 11th, 7:00 p.m. at the Public Library, Ogden. *(Please call the Boone Co. Extension 515-432-3882).*
March 17th, 7:00 p.m. at the Memorial Hall, Eagle Grove. *(Please call the Wright Co. Extension 515-532-3453).*
March 18th, 7:00 p.m. at the FC Meeting Room, Farnhamville. *(Please call the Calhoun Co. Extension 712-297-8611.)*

Q. When will I.D.A.L.S. give pesticide applicator certification tests?

- A. March 13th, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Hamilton Co. Extension Office, 515-832-9597.
March 18th, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Webster Co. Extension Office, 515-576-2119.
Starting April 28th and then the last Monday of the following month, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Calhoun Co. Extension Office, 712-297-8611.
Tests are given in Des Moines on the first floor of the Wallace Building at the pesticide bureau any day state offices are open from 9 a.m.– 3 p.m. Tests are given on a first-come, first-serve basis. Test space at the office in Des Moines is limited to less than 10.

Q. Which soap should we use for most effective hand washing?

- A. Antibacterial soaps contain a chemical that is effective against a variety of bacteria. Antibacterial soaps are ineffective against most viruses. Bar soap and liquid soaps are both effective at removing soiling and bacteria. The important concept is to prevent bar soap from sitting in a “soap soup” and to allow it to partially dry between uses. Hand sanitizers are mainly alcohol which kills bacteria and some viruses on contact. They are effective against respiratory viruses but not against intestinal viruses. Hand sanitizers are generally not effective on soiled hands.

We're on the Web! <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/webster/info/acreage.htm>

Iowa State University Extension

Webster County Extension

217 South 25th St., Ste. C12
Fort Dodge, IA 50501-4676