



**Maryland Retired School Personnel Association**  
**CONSUMER CONNECTION**

A Publication of the MRSPA Consumer Education  
Committee

September-October, 2020



**Be Counted, Maryland!**  
**Self response to the Census continues through September 30, 2020.**

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts a count of every person living in the United States every 10 years, mandated by the U.S. Constitution in Article 1, Section 2. The data collected by the decennial census determines the number of seats Maryland has in the U.S. House of Representatives and is also used to distribute billions in federal funds to its local communities. For questions about completing the Census, go to [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov).

**Not sure where to find COVID-19 Updates?**

Check out the Maryland Department of Health website at <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov> for the latest information.

You can find information about testing (where to get a test), the latest statistics for your county or city, and much more information about the pandemic.



**Stay informed and stay safe!**

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## The Office of the Attorney General of Maryland warns residents about Coronavirus Scams.

### Some tips to keep scammers at bay:

- Don't click on links from sources you don't know. It could download a virus onto your computer or device. Make sure anti-malware and anti-virus software on your computer is up to date.
- Watch for emails claiming to be from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or experts saying that have information about the virus.
- Ignore online offers for vaccinations. If you see ads touting prevention, treatment, or cure claims for the Coronavirus, ask yourself if there has been a medical breakthrough, would you be hearing about it the first time through an ad or a sales pitch?
- Do your homework when it comes to donations, whether through charities or crowdfunding sites. Don't let anyone rush you into making a donation. If someone wants donations by cash, by gift card, or by wiring money, don't do it.



### Tired of being stuck at home?

**Did you know that you can take virtual tours on the Maryland Department of Tourism website? Some active cams have visits with flamingos at the Maryland Zoo, or you can learn about the Chesapeake Bay Water Shed and the importance of clean water by watching their video. You can check in on the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore, as well as activities for the whole family! It's a wealth of information!**

**Fight the boredom! Check them out!**





## **Cook with caution!**

- ⇒ Be on alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol don't use the stove or stovetop.
- ⇒ Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, boiling, grilling or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen, even for a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- ⇒ If you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- ⇒ Keep anything that can catch fire—oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains—away from your stovetop.

## **If you have a small (grease) cooking fire and decide to fight the fire...**

- ⇒ On the stovetop, smother the flames by sliding a lid over the pan and turning off the burner. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
- ⇒ For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.

## **If you have any doubt about fighting a small fire....**

- ⇒ Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire. Leave the outside door unlocked for first responder access.
- ⇒ Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number from outside the home.

**Tips from the National Fire Prevention Association [nfpa.org/education](http://nfpa.org/education)**

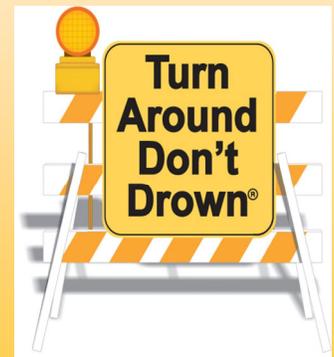


**Hurricane season is upon us! Hurricanes are most active now, until the end of November. Make sure that you and your family have a plan. With COVID-19, plans can be different from prior years. Find out what your local area is doing about shelters before the storm hits.**

**Get your emergency kit ready.**

**The top 10 items for your kit:**

1. Emergency food, drinking water
2. Flashlights and batteries
3. Cash and credit cards
4. Medicine/Prescriptions
5. First aid kit
6. Personal Identification
7. Matches and lighters
8. Gas for generator or vehicle
9. Radio (battery-operated)
10. Cooler (with ice)



**And, with all of the heavy rains we have been having, don't forget this important advice!**



## Maryland Produce is still great in September and October!

Crops that are still readily available in the fall:  
Grapes, turnips, apples, raspberries (red), gourds, sweet potatoes and pumpkins.

**Buy local and support your local farmers!**

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### Best Deals

### September



- Mattresses
- iPhones
- Coffee—National Coffee Day is September 29th. Offers are generally advertised on Instagram and Twitter

### October

- Jeans
- All things outdoor—retailers are looking to clear out all of their outdoor lawn equipment, patio furniture, etc. It's also a great time to pick up good deals on perennials for your garden.
- National Taco Day is October 4th—look for freebies!



**And don't forget about these two great websites:**

[Gasbuddy.com](https://www.gasbuddy.com) for the lowest gas prices in your area

[Goodrx.com](https://www.goodrx.com) for best prices on prescriptions

### Don't Forget Your Flu Shot!



With Covid-19 ever-present, it is more important than ever for seniors to get protections against the seasonal influenza virus. October is the best time to get it done. Either the Fluzone High-dose or the Fluvad vaccines are recommended for our age group. It is typically covered by Medicare. Check with your caregiver or pharmacist. For more detailed information go to the Maryland Department of Aging online, and search Flu Season for Older Adults.



**National Prescription Drug Take Back Day** is **October 24**. The next National Take Back Day will be **October 24, 2020**. This event is a safe, convenient, and responsible way to dispose of unused or expired prescription drugs at locations in communities throughout the country.

Not sure where to find a location near you? Check DEA's official website at:

**<https://takebackday.dea.gov>**

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**Other important things to do in September and October:**

- ***Change your smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector batteries.***
- ***Have your furnace inspected for leaks.***

***Have a safe and happy Fall***

