



## April is Stress Awareness Month

### What does stress mean to you?

We all experience stress – yet we may experience it in very different ways. Because of this, there is no single definition for stress, but the most common explanation is a physical, mental, or emotional strain or tension.

Stress is a reaction to a situation where a person feels anxious or threatened. Learning healthy ways to cope and getting the proper care and support can help reduce stressful feelings and symptoms.

Common reactions to a stressful event can include:

- Disbelief, shock and numbness
- Feeling sad, frustrated and helpless
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Headaches, back pains and stomach problems
- Smoking or the use of alcohol or drugs

### Affecting more than just your mind

Long-term stress can prove to be more than just a mental issue. From headaches to stomach disorders to depression – even very serious issues like stroke and heart disease can come as a result of stress. When you are placed in a stressful situation, specific stress hormones rush into your bloodstream leading to an increase in heart rate, blood pressure and glucose levels. This is helpful in emergency situations, but having this “rush” for extended periods of time can be dangerous and make you susceptible to the issues mentioned previously.

### Learn to overcome issues you cannot change

Sometimes the stress in our lives is not something we have the power to change. Try to:

- Recognize when you don't have control, and let it go.
- Avoid getting anxious about situations that you cannot change.
- Take control of your reactions and focus your mind on something that makes you feel calm and in control.
- Develop a vision for healthy living, wellness, and personal growth, and set realistic goals to help you realize your vision.

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## Here are some basic ideas to help you cope with stress:

- Take care of yourself – eat healthy, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, give yourself a break if you feel stressed.
- Share your problems and how you are feeling and coping with a family member, friend, doctor, pastor or counselor.
- Avoid drugs and alcohol. These can create additional problems and increase the stress you are already feeling.
- Recognize when you need more help – know when to talk to a psychologist, social worker or counselor if things continue.

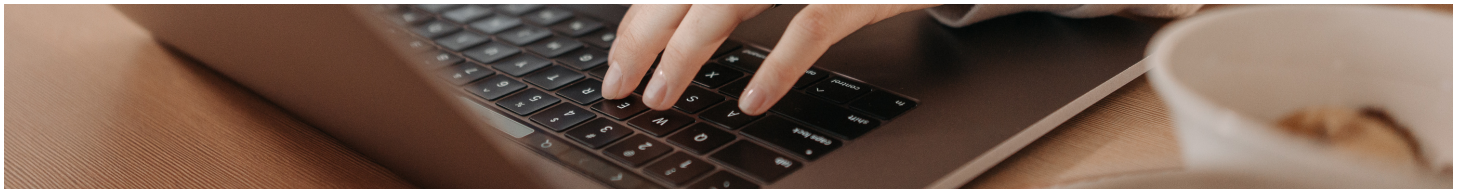
Potentially the most valuable takeaway here is knowing how to talk to others about your stress. This goes both ways, as you need to know how to discuss your problems with others as well as talk to anyone that comes to you with their issues.

### Original post:

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**Taking a vacation day or using comp time hours to relax and recharge is always a great option! Feel like you need extra help with your stress? You can use a sick day for an appointment with your doctor to discuss the problems you're having. Information on Leave can be found in PPPM 300. Taking time off is an important part of staying healthy and employees are encouraged to use their earned time off when needed.**





## Employee Self Service Portal

The Employee Self-Service portal is the go-to place for important information. Employees can access the portal [here](#) or at [cityoftulsa.org/employees](http://cityoftulsa.org/employees)

Each employee should set up their log in (username is your employee ID #) so they can easily access important information about their pay and check stubs, tax information and more. Since April is tax season, it is important to note that the self-service portal is the place to find your 2023 W-2 and your previous year tax forms, in addition to other important pay and tax forms you may need throughout the year.

Need to update your address or emergency contact? The ESS Portal is the place to do this too. The employee self-service portal is also the place to review your job applications and apply for internal and external City jobs, file your expense reimbursement requests for travel and gym reimbursements, and review your professional certifications.

Home

### Employee Self Service

Certifications

Expense Reports

Pay/Tax Information

Performance Management

Personal Information

Employment Opportunities





# Thunderstorm Preparedness

Thunderstorms are dangerous storms with lightning. A lightning strike can kill you. Thunderstorms often bring:

- Powerful winds that can knock down trees, power lines, and mobile homes
- Intense rainfall that causes flash floods
- Tornadoes
- Lightning strikes that can spark fires
- Damaging hail

But we can take action to prepare. Prepare now to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your home.

## What to Do: Before a Storm

### Identify a Sturdy Building and Practice Drills

- You need to **get inside** a sturdy building before a thunderstorm hits. A sturdy building is a structure with walls and a foundation. Once you have identified a sturdy building, plan to shelter in the basement or a small, interior, windowless room on the lowest level to provide additional protection from high winds. Plan to stay inside until weather forecasts indicate it is safe to leave.
- Mobile, manufactured, trailer homes, and recreational vehicles (RVs) are not safe in high winds. If you live in one of these structures, you need to **identify a sturdy building nearby** that you can get to quickly.
- **Practice drills** with everyone in your household, so everyone knows where to go and what to do before a thunderstorm hits.

### Plan to Stay Connected

- Sign up for free **emergency alerts** from your local government.
- **Monitor** local weather and news.
- **Have a plan** to keep your phone charged.
- In case of a power outage **have a battery-powered radio**.
- **Understand the types of alerts** that you may receive and have a plan to respond:
  - A WATCH means Be Prepared!
  - A WARNING means Take Action!

### Learn Emergency Skills

- **Learn First Aid and CPR.** City of Tulsa employees can sign up for free classes through their workgroup's training Registrar.
- Utilities may be offline. Be prepared to live without power, gas, and water. **Plan for your electrical needs**, including cell phones and medical equipment.

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## Protect Your Home

- Make a list of items outside your home you will need to **tie down or put away** so that they don't blow away or fly through a window during high winds. When a High Wind, Severe Thunderstorm, or Tornado Watch, is issued, immediately secure these items to avoid damage or injury once the wind starts picking up.
- **Secure objects** that would be unsafe to bring inside, such as gas grills and propane tanks.
- **Trim or remove trees** close enough to fall on your home.
- Keep drains, gutters, and downspouts **clean**.
- Find out if your home is **prone to flooding**. If it is, consider:
  - Installing a sump pump with battery backup.
  - Elevating the heating system, water heater, and electrical panel.
- **Review your home insurance policy**. Check to see if you are covered for flood damage.

## What to Do: During a Storm

### When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

- **Pay attention to weather alerts** and local information. Postpone outdoor activities if the forecast calls for thunderstorms.
- When you hear thunder, **seek shelter inside a sturdy building** and move to a basement or an interior room on the lowest floor. Stay away from glass windows and doors. Stay inside until weather forecasts indicate it is safe to leave.
- **Lightning can be dangerous** even when you are inside.
  - Avoid using devices connected to electrical outlets.
  - Avoid running water. Lightning can travel through plumbing and water lines.
- Remember, no place outside is safe when thunderstorms are in the area. If you are caught outside in a thunderstorm, **keep moving toward a safe shelter**.
- Sheds, gazebos, dugouts, and bleachers do not protect from lightning and high winds.
- It is dangerous to take shelter under a tree as it is the leading cause of death from lightning strikes. You could also be killed or injured by strong winds blowing down trees and branches.
- Being in a vehicle is safer than being outside; however, if you have time, drive to the closest sturdy building, and take shelter inside.
- If you are driving and can't get to a sturdy building, pull off the road and park in a place where falling trees and power lines won't hit you.
- Flash flooding happens quickly. Move to higher ground before floodwaters reach you. Never walk, swim, or drive through floodwater. **Turn Around! Don't Drown!**

## What to Do: After a Storm

### Prevent Injuries

- **Avoid fallen power lines, poles, and wires**. They can electrocute you. Report them to the utility company immediately.
  - **Expect power outages**.
    - Avoid using candles due to the risk of fires. Use battery-powered lights and flashlights instead.
    - Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Only use generators, grills, and camp stoves outdoors and away from windows.
    - Don't get sick from eating spoiled food. Throw out food that got wet or warm. When in doubt, throw it out!
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## Take Care of Yourself

- It's normal to have a lot of bad feelings, stress or anxiety.
- Eat healthy food and get enough sleep to help you deal with stress.
- You may make a private appointment for any type of personal problem(s) that may be too much to handle alone. **Call Community Care EAP at (918) 594-5232.**

