

## Lincoln Dance Party



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Phil Baker had everyone at Lincoln Elementary School dancing, singing and moving during an assembly Wednesday, Dec. 23.

## Kids: Seven Tips To Help You Reach Your New Year's Resolutions

"Do you have a New Year's resolution?" You hear that a lot in December and January. You may be wondering what a New Year's resolution is.

A New Year's resolution is a goal you set to improve something about yourself, starting in the New Year. Your parents may make resolutions to get more exercise, save money, or spend more time as a family. You can decide to keep your room clean, do your chores without being told, or save more of your allowance.

Here are seven tips from Kids.gov to help you reach your goal:

1. Pick something that's important to you.
2. Make your resolution specific. Let's say your goal is to do better in school. Does that mean getting all A's and B's? Or does it mean improving your grades in math or science?
3. Make a plan you can stick with. If you say, "I'm going to study for two hours

every day," you may do it for the first week or two — then you may get bored, frustrated, or too busy with chores and after-school activities. You want to give up.

Instead, you can say, "I'll do my homework every day. On the days I don't have somewhere to go (like sports practice or music lessons) I'll study an extra 30 minutes. For tests I'll start studying a week in advance."

4. Write your goal down and put it where you'll see it every day, like on the refrigerator or your bedroom wall.
5. Tell your goal to someone, like your mom, dad, or best friend. They can help support your goal.
6. Congratulate yourself for making progress, even if you don't do everything perfectly or all the time.
7. Remember, it's your resolution. If you quit, you can always start again — you don't have to wait for next year.

## Homeland Security Urges Public To Watch For Terrorism Signs

PIERRE — South Dakota's Homeland Security Office is encouraging citizens to watch for eight signs that could indicate possible terrorist activity.

State Homeland Security Director Steve Pluta stresses that while there are no current terrorism threats identified in South Dakota, people still need to be observant.

"The recent terrorist events throughout the world have shown that such activity can take place anywhere," he says. "By knowing these signs, citizens can identify behaviors possibly associated with terrorist activity and notify law enforcement if they see anything suspicious."

- Surveillance: If people are conducting a survey of the target to determine security strengths and weaknesses. This may include taking pictures of access points, security personnel, and security cameras.

- Information Gathering: If an individual is asking probing questions about security or operations related to an intended target.

- Testing Security: Are they trying to find out how long and from where law enforcement or security will respond to an incident? This may include leaving behind an unattended package or trespassing.

- Funding: Collecting money needed for weapons and supplies. Ways to raise funds include drug trafficking or soliciting fake charitable contributions.

- Acquiring Supplies: This may include weapons, transportation and communications equipment. Those involved may stockpile items, make strange purchases or bulk purchases of chemicals such as household cleaners, fertilizer or beauty supplies. They may pay for large transactions with cash or pre-paid

credit cards.

- Impersonation: This includes the use of aliases or impersonation of first responders, maintenance workers or employees. They may present false documents or identification and wear incomplete uniforms.

- Rehearsal: They may rehearse the incident several times to include testing weapons, putting their people into place and testing emergency response times.

- Deployment: Getting into position and ready to execute the operation.

Pluta says knowing the eight signs is part of remaining vigilant even in a small state like South Dakota.

- "All of us need to be watching for suspicious or unusual behavior," he says. "If you notice somebody paying repeated close attention to a particular building or any other unusual activity as mentioned, you should call law enforcement."

Since July, South Dakota has participated in the "If You See Something, Say Something" campaign. It was originally implemented by the New York City Metropolitan Transportation Authority and licensed to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as a nationwide campaign. Pluta says it is another way to encourage people to report possible suspicious or unusual behavior.

To alert authorities of any suspicious behavior, call 844-373-7233 (844-3SD-SAFE). The tip line is not a substitute for 911. Citizens should still call 911 for emergencies.

For more on the national program, visit <https://www.dhs.gov/see-something-say-something>.

The South Dakota Homeland Security Office is part of the state Department of Public Safety.

# Agricultural Water Management Will Be A Key Issue In 2016

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN  
Sponsored by Lewis & Clark Behavioral Health

How farmers use water for irrigation and the quality of water that drains from farmland will be major topics of public and political discussion in 2016.

This and next week's articles rely heavily on researched hydrological data and reports obtained from professional scientists in agriculture and hydrology, articles in scientific journals, the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) and the U.S. Geological Survey.

There are two main issues: 1) is there enough water for everyone, and 2) is water runoff and water that has been used by agriculture, industry and households potable as it goes downstream to other consumers? Today we look at the availability of water worldwide.

Water Availability. Most consumable water originates either from precipitation which is stored in reservoirs and upper soil formations or from underground aquifers. Desalination projects account for less than one percent of the water consumed in the U.S., though as much as 40 percent of Israel's water.

Even though El Nino is easing some of the immediate water shortages in parts of the Western U.S., U.S. Geological Survey reports quoted last month in USA Today indicate shrinking long-term supplies of water in the West and High Plains. The Geological Survey conducted annual analyses of water levels in 32,000 sampled wells around the country over the past two decades.

Water levels fell in 64 percent of the database wells over the past 20 years. These wells mostly rely on underground aquifers throughout the country. The losses are greatest in the seven westernmost "lower 48" states and the Ogallala Aquifer, which underlies most of Nebraska and parts of six other High Plains states.

Agricultural crop irrigation annually consumes around 90 percent of the water that is used for any purpose in the seven westernmost "lower 48" states. Although some residents of the region



Dr. Mike ROSMANN

have questioned if there is sufficient storage capacity for runoff of snow and rain and claim too much water ends up in the Pacific Ocean that could have been used more beneficially, state and federal government decision-makers have prevailed.

Critics also argue that fishery, wetland and wildlife regulations require more runoff water than necessary, but government regulators have had the last word thus far.

Declining availability of water for agriculture, drinking and industrial use is a worldwide phenomenon. A November National Public Radio (NPR) broadcast reported that a Saudi Arabian entrepreneur purchased 15 square miles of southern Arizona farmland recently — where both surface and underground water supplies are already short — to raise alfalfa hay to feed dairy cows in his home country.

Each of 15 wells, one per square mile, supply the water needed for 10-11 alfalfa crops yearly, to produce hay for shipment to Saudi Arabia, where dairies and crops in this and nearby arid countries have mostly depleted their underground aquifers.

NPR asked other Arizona farmers and other residents who were losing their diminishing subsurface and surface water for agricultural exports why they weren't alarmed. Many respondents said anyone has the right to farm and they didn't know about the depletion of their aquifers.

Hay isn't the only crop that depletes U.S. underground water storages. According to a December 2015 ERS report, in 2012 irrigated farms accounted for roughly half the total value of all U.S. crop sales. Seventeen percent of U.S. cropland was irrigated in 2012; 90 percent of irrigated crops were produced in the 17 western-most states, excluding

Alaska and Hawaii.

U.S. agricultural exports overall doubled from 2006 to 2014, according to the same December 2015 ERS report. China is the best customer for U.S. agricultural goods; Canada, Mexico and Japan are next.

The large surplus of agricultural exports over imports of agricultural goods is a bright spot in the U.S. economy. Agricultural production comes with costs however, mainly gradual lowering of the quantity and quality of water in the U.S.

Conclusions about water availability. Currently, 89 percent of the world's human population has access to potable water. The supply of potable water available worldwide is declining, mostly because of depletion of underground supplies, even though the amounts of precipitation remain relatively constant.

Agriculture is the main user of underground aquifers in the U.S., but 64 percent of the water used for irrigation comes from surface collectors like reservoirs and streams. The amount of water available for agriculture and other uses from underground aquifers is declining more slowly in the U.S. than in many highly agricultural countries, largely because newer irrigation methods are reducing evaporation, which accounts for the loss of 42 percent of irrigated water. Drought-tolerant crops are also being developed and planted.

India, China and many predominantly desert countries are using up their underground aquifers much more rapidly. Insufficiency of water will soon become a worldwide phenomenon, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization warns.

Next week's Farm and Ranch Life column examines agricultural water runoff and related issues in greater depth.

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## 2016 Tax Season Opens Jan. 19 For Nation's Taxpayers

WASHINGTON — Following a review of the tax extenders legislation signed into law last week, the Internal Revenue Service announced today that the nation's tax season will begin as scheduled on Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2016.

The IRS will begin accepting individual electronic returns that day. The IRS expects to receive more than 150 million individual returns in 2016, with more than four out of five being prepared using tax return preparation software and e-filed. The IRS will begin processing paper tax returns at the same time. There is no advantage to people filing tax returns on paper in early January instead of waiting for e-file to begin.

"We look forward to opening the 2016 tax season on time," IRS Commissioner John Koskinen said. "Our employees have been working hard throughout this year to make this happen. We also appreciate the help from the nation's tax professionals and the software community, who are critical to helping taxpayers during the filing season."

As part of the Security

Summit initiative, the IRS has been working closely with the tax industry and state revenue departments to provide stronger protections against identity theft for taxpayers during the coming filing season.

The filing deadline to submit 2015 tax returns is Monday, April 18, 2016, rather than the traditional April 15 date. Washington, D.C., will celebrate Emancipation Day on that Friday, which pushes the deadline to the following Monday for most of the nation. (Due to Patriots Day, the deadline will be Tuesday, April 19, in Maine and Massachusetts.)

Koskinen noted the new legislation makes permanent many provisions and extends many others for several years. "This provides certainty for planning purposes, which will help taxpayers and the tax community as well as the IRS," he said.

The IRS urges all taxpayers to make sure they have all their year-end statements in hand before filing, including Forms W-2 from employ-

ers, Forms 1099 from banks and other payers, and Form 1095-A from the Marketplace for those claiming the premium tax credit.

"We encourage taxpayers to take full advantage of the expanding array of tools and information on IRS.gov to make their tax preparation easier," Koskinen said.

Although the IRS begins accepting returns on Jan. 19, many tax software companies will begin accepting tax returns earlier in January and submitting them to the IRS when processing systems open.

Choosing e-file and direct deposit for refunds remains the fastest and safest way to file an accurate income tax return and receive a refund. The IRS anticipates issuing more than nine out of 10 refunds in less than 21 days. Find free options to get tax help, and to prepare and file your return on IRS.gov or in your community if you qualify. Go to IRS.gov and click on the Filing tab to see your options.

Seventy percent of the nation's taxpayers are eligible

for IRS Free File. Commercial partners of the IRS offer free brand-name software to about 100 million individuals and families with incomes of \$62,000 or less;

Online fillable forms provides electronic versions of IRS paper forms to all taxpayers regardless of income that can be prepared and filed by people comfortable with completing their own returns.

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) offer free tax help to people who qualify. Go to [irs.gov](http://irs.gov) and enter "free tax prep" in the search box to learn more and find a VITA or TCE site near you, or download the IRS2Go app on your smart phone and find a free tax prep provider.

The IRS also reminds taxpayers that a trusted tax professional can provide helpful information and advice about the ever-changing tax code. Tips for choosing a return preparer and details about national tax professional groups are available on IRS.gov.

## Members Sought For Neb. Professional Boards

LINCOLN, Neb. — The State Board of Health is seeking members to serve on several health care Boards. Professional boards are responsible for granting license privileges to health care providers.

Terms are five years long and run through Nov. 30, 2020, and then members would be eligible for reappointment to a five-year term.

The following boards have vacancies:

- Board of Advance Practice Registered Nurses: Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Board of Alcohol and Drug Counseling: Alcohol & Drug Counselor Only, Public
- Board of Audiology & Speech-Language Pathology: Public
- Board of Cosmetology, Electrology, Esthetics, Nail Technology, and Body Art:

- Tanning Salon Owner, Public
- Board of Funeral Directing and Embalming: Public
- Board of Medical Nutrition Therapy: Public
- Board of Mental Health Practice: Licensed Mental Health Practitioner
- Board of Occupational Therapy: Public
- Perfusion Committee: Perfusionist
- Board of Psychology: Public (partial term)
- Board of Registered Environmental Health Specialists: Public (partial term)

People interested in serving on a board can get an application by contacting the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Licensure Unit/RPQI, P.O. Box

95026, Lincoln, NE 68509-5026; by email at [monica.gissler@nebraska.gov](mailto:monica.gissler@nebraska.gov); or by phone at (402) 471-6515.

Public member applicants must be at least 19 years old, be a Nebraska resident for at least one year, must not hold an active credential in a profession subject to the Uniform Credentialing Act, must not be or have been employed by a facility subject to the Health Care Facility Act, and must not be the parent, child, spouse or household member of a person currently regulated by the board to which the appointment is being made.

Application deadline is Jan. 11. Interviews will be conducted in Lincoln on Jan. 25.

### SCHOLASTICS

**DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
MADISON — Dakota State University in Madison held the fall commencement ceremony Saturday, Dec. 12, at 10:30 a.m. in the DSU Fieldhouse. Dakota State awarded three doctorates, 62 master's, 95 baccalaureate and 13 associate degrees.

Area candidates for graduation who chose to share their information include:

- Morgan Van Zee, Parkston, Bachelor of Science in Education in Elementary Education, Summa Cum Laude.
- Emily Fedders, Yankton,

Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Care, Cum Laude.

**CHADRON STATE COLLEGE**  
CHADRON, Neb. — Chadron State College has announced that 387 students met requirements for the fall 2015 dean's list by earning at least a 3.5 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale. Students must be enrolled in at least 12 credit hours of coursework during the semester to qualify.

- Leo Haselhorst of Randolph, Nebraska.
- Kelsey Knust of Verdigré, Nebraska.

- Sadie Linville of Randolph, Nebraska.

Chadron State College, which was founded in 1911, is the only four-year, regionally-accredited college in the western half of Nebraska. As a public institution with its roots in teacher education, Chadron State takes pride in its accessibility and affordability. More than 3,000 undergraduate, graduate and online students currently attend Chadron State and its curriculum has grown to offer programs and courses in 65 majors and endorsements and eight master's degree programs.

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