



DOUGLAS COUNTY Healthy Directions Wellness Newsletter



You can see it in the sneaker-wearing, co-workers heading out to the streets around lunch time. The Douglas County Summer Wellness Challenge is underway!

This is the second summer for Healthy Directions, Douglas County's employee wellness program, and the growth that is taking place is a real reason to get excited. More than 300 people have signed up for this summer's competition. That's more than double last year's enrollment.

"I think it's wonderful," says Healthy Directions Chairwoman Kathy Goodman.

The Summer Wellness Challenge is a 12-week incentive program open to all Douglas County employees that was created to help increase your wellness and energy levels. It was designed with the idea of encouraging people to look at different ways of improving their health.

"Not just exercise this time," Kathy said.

Check out the Challenge 2010 Scorecard and you'll see there are ways to earn points through exercise, by eating fruits and vegetables, by drinking water and using your seatbelt – a concern that turned up in the wellness surveys employees took.

Each day you're supposed to record how much you took part in each type of activity. Your scorecard should be returned to Employee Benefits in Human Resources the first of each month and will make you eligible for a prize drawing.

What's Inside:

JUNE, 2010

- Use Sun Safety!
- Star Fruit: A Stellar Snack
- Lightening Saftey
- Simplify Your Life - Reduce Stress
- Haven In The City and more!

At the end of the challenge, the points will be totaled and winners determined in the beginners and intermediate classes. First prize is a \$25 Scheels gift card with a \$15 Scheels gift card goes to second place.

There is no cost to enter, and despite the registration deadline already passing, Kathy said you will not be turned away. All of the information is on the Healthy Directions website under the Healthy Options menu item.

The Summer Wellness Challenge includes opportunities to get motivated for the challenge. Dr. Jason Wiese - owner and operator of Life Source Chiropractic - returns for two days of lunch and learn presentations. "Living a Maximized Life" will be his focus on June 16 at the Health Center and June 23rd at the Civic Center. His inspirational talks last year helped launch Healthy Directions.

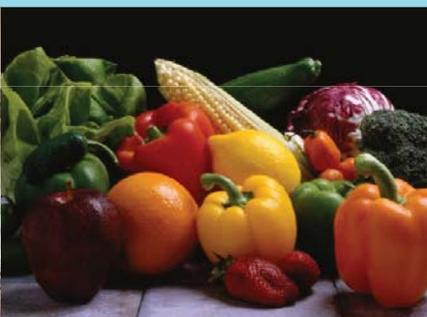
Kathy's excitement about Healthy Direction continues to grow as the wellness program attracts new participants. She sees the enthusiasm of our employees continuing to grow, and not a day goes by that she doesn't have someone thank her for the program.

"They are always asking us to come up with more creative ideas to help them improve their health," she said.

"I think employees feel that we're very interested in their wellness," she says. "And they're right!"

Phil Rooney

Make this your healthiest summer ever!



COMMIT TO BE FIT



USE SUN SAFETY!

It's natural to enjoy all kinds of outdoor activities! The Sun Safety Alliance (SSA) encourages you to follow these sun-safety tips year-round to help prevent serious skin damage - and possibly skin cancer - later!

- Keep in mind the sun is strongest between 10 am - 4 pm.
- Wear clothing that's dark and tightly woven.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses.
- Remember that UV rays bounce off sand, snow, concrete, and water.
- Do not use sun tanning beds.
- Keep very young children (6 months or less) out of the sun.
- Sunscreens need to be applied liberally and evenly over all exposed areas.
- Apply a sunscreen with a SPF of 15 or higher whenever you're outdoors. To achieve adequate UV protection you should use products that provide broad spectrum protection, which means protection against both UVB and UVA rays. For broad spectrum protection, look for products that provide an SPF of at least 15 and contain ingredients like Avobenzone (Parsol 1789) or zinc oxide.
- For children, the SSA recommends sunscreen with an SPF 30 or higher.
- Apply sunscreen before going outdoors and reapply often.
- Reapply sunscreen after swimming, perspiring, and toweling off.
- Provide complete sunscreen coverage for your skin (including neck, ears and lips!).
- For people with thin or thinning hair, apply sunscreen to the scalp as well.
- Remember: stay in the shade whenever possible!

For more information on sun safety log on to:
www.sunsaftyalliance.org

The star fruit or carambola acquired its name from the five pointed star shape when cut across the middle of the fruit. It has a waxy, golden yellow to green color skin with a complicated flavor combination that includes plums, pine-apples, and lemons.

Star Fruit

Serving size 1/2 cup sliced, raw (54g)

Amounts Per Serving % Daily Value

Calories 20

Calories from Fat 0

Total Fat 0g 0%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 0mg 0%

Total Carbohydrate 4g 1%

Dietary Fiber 1g 4%

Sugars 3g

Protein 0g

Vitamin A 0%

Vitamin C 20%

Calcium 0%

Iron 0%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.



STAR FRUIT:
A STELLAR SNACK

Originally from Sri Lanka and the Moluccas, and cultivated in Southeast Asia and Malaysia for several hundred years, this fruit also goes by many other names including: bilimbi, belimbing, Chinese star fruit, five-angled fruit and the star apple. Today, star fruit flourishes in south Florida and Hawaii because the fruit thrives on growing in a warm environment. Two types of star fruit are grown, tart and sweet. Tart varieties typically have narrowly spaced ribs, while sweet varieties tend to have thick, fleshy ribs. The tastes between the two are hardly distinguishable, as the tart variety still has some sweetness. This tropical fruit is readily available July through February.

Star fruits are an excellent source of vitamin C, is low fat, and naturally sodium and cholesterol free. A small whole star fruit will provide approximately 2/3 cup sliced.

Selection

Select firm, shiny skinned, even colored fruit. Star fruits will ripen at room temperature and have lightly brown edges on the ribs when it's ripe. Avoid purchasing star fruit with brown, shriveled ribs. This fruit is also available dried.

Storage

Non-ripe star fruit should be turned often, until they are yellow in color and ripe with light brown ribs. Store ripe star fruits at room temperature for two to three days or unwashed, and refrigerated, in a plastic bag for up to one week.

Preparation

Star fruits are great to eat out of hand as these tropical delights do not need to be peeled or seeded before eating. Simply wash the fruit, remove any blemished areas, cut crosswise to get the star shape, and eat!

www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

COMMIT TO BE FIT

LIGHTNING SAFETY

When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

Each year in the United States, more than 400 people are struck by lightning. On average, between 55 and 60 people are killed; hundreds of others suffer permanent neurological disabilities. Most of these tragedies can be avoided with a few simple precautions.

What You Might Not Know About Lightning

- All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous. In the United States, in an average year, lightning kills about the same number of people as tornadoes and more people than hurricanes.
- Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain and may strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall.
- Many lightning deaths occur ahead of storms or after storms have seemingly passed.
- If you can hear thunder, you are in danger. Don't be fooled by blue skies. If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to pose an immediate threat.
- Lightning leaves many victims with permanent disabilities. While a small percentage of lightning strike victims die, many survivors must learn to live with very serious lifelong pain and neurological disabilities.

Avoid the Lightning Threat

- Have a lightning safety plan. Know where you'll go for safety and how much time it will take to get there. Make sure your plan allows enough time to reach safety.
- Postpone activities. Before going outdoors, check the forecast for thunderstorms. Consider postponing activities to avoid being caught in a dangerous situation.
- Monitor the weather. Look for signs of a developing thunderstorm such as darkening skies, flashes of lightning or increasing wind.
- Get to a safe place. If you hear thunder, even a distant rumble, immediately move to a safe place. Fully enclosed buildings with wiring and plumbing provide the best protection. Sheds, picnic shelters, tents or covered porches do NOT protect you from lightning. If a sturdy building is not nearby, get into a hard-topped metal vehicle and close all the windows. Stay inside until 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder.
- If you hear thunder, don't use a corded phone except in an emergency. Cordless phones and cell phones are safe to use.
- Keep away from electrical equipment and wiring.
- Water pipes conduct electricity. Don't take a bath or shower or use other plumbing during a storm.

Organized Outdoor Activities

- Many people enjoy outdoor activities. It's essential for the people in charge of these activities to understand the dangers of lightning, have a lightning safety plan in place, and follow the plan once thunder is heard or lightning is seen.

Many outdoor activities rely on volunteer leaders, coaches or sports officials to make safety decisions. Make sure the leaders of these activities follow a lightning safety plan. Don't be afraid to ask, and don't be afraid to speak out during an event if conditions become unsafe. You could save a life!

What You Should Know About Being Caught Outside Near a Thunderstorm

There is no safe place outside in a thunderstorm. Plan ahead to avoid this dangerous situation! If you're outside and hear thunder, the only way to significantly reduce your risk of becoming a lightning casualty is to get inside a substantial building or hard-topped metal vehicle as fast as you can. In addition, you should avoid the following situations which could increase your risk of becoming a lightning casualty.

Remember – there is no substitute for getting to a safe place.

- Avoid open areas. Don't be the tallest object in the area.
- Stay away from isolated tall trees, towers or utility poles. Lightning tends to strike the taller objects in an area.
- Stay away from metal conductors such as wires or fences. Metal does not attract lightning, but lightning can travel long distances through it.
- If you are with a group of people, spread out. While this actually increases the chance that someone might get struck, it tends to prevent multiple casualties, and increases the chances that someone could help if a person is struck.

Act Fast If Someone Is Struck by Lightning!

- Lightning victims do not carry an electrical charge, are safe to touch, and need urgent medical attention.
- Cardiac arrest is the immediate cause of death for those who die. Some deaths can be prevented if the victim receives the proper first aid immediately.
- Call for help. Call 9-1-1 or your local ambulance service.
- Give first aid. Do not delay CPR if the person is unresponsive or not breathing. Use an Automatic External Defibrillator if one is available.
- If possible, move the victim to a safer place. Lightning can strike twice. Don't become a victim.

Stay Informed About Storms

Listen to NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards

There are an estimated 25 million cloud-to-ground lightning flashes in the U.S. each year. While the National Weather Service (NWS) issues severe thunderstorm watches and warnings for storms that produce damaging wind or hail, watches and warnings are NOT issued for lightning. When you hear thunder, there is an immediate lightning danger.

As a further safety measure, consider purchasing a portable, battery-powered, tone-alert NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards. The radio will allow you to monitor any short-term forecasts for changing weather conditions. The tone-alert feature can automatically alert you when the NWS issues a severe thunderstorm watch or warning.

www.weather.gov

SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE - REDUCE STRESS

Stress is part of life, but it doesn't have to rule your life. Fight stress by simplifying and decluttering your life and mind.

You've probably noticed the word "simplify" popping up in magazine articles and talk show discussions about how to deal with the chaos and complexity of modern life. There's even a monthly magazine about how to simplify your life.

The resurgence of an old idea - living a simpler life - isn't surprising at a time when many people feel overwhelmed by their busy, complicated lives. The voluntary simplicity movement, as it's sometimes called, preaches the value of living a more balanced, less stressful, deliberate and thoughtful life. You don't have to be a zealot, though, to want to simplify your life.

The effect of clutter

Can't find your car keys amid the piles on your counter? Tired of having to excavate the kitchen table before you can serve dinner? There's no question, being surrounded by clutter is an ongoing cause of stress. It's more than just an irritation, though. When you're surrounded by more things than you can manage, it sends a visual message that your life is out of control. And it can become a vicious circle, where disorder brings about procrastination, which only perpetuates the chaos. To make matters worse, when you're under stress, cortisol, the stress hormone, short-circuits your brain leading to forgetfulness, irritation and plain old meltdowns. It's not just your home that can get cluttered. Your life and even your mind can also become overcrowded with too much junk. Maybe it's time to try a new approach. The following are ideas to help you simplify your life and reduce stress. Choose one and give it a try.

Clear the clutter

Pick one area to tackle, such as the junk drawer in the kitchen or the piles of clothes in the bedroom. Take a hard look at what you've accumulated. Clear out any items you're not using. If they're in good condition, consider donating them to a local charity. If you absolutely can't part with some items, box them up and put an expiration date of a year in the future on the box. Store the box. If the box remains unopened until the expiration date, you clearly can do without its contents. Trash or donate the box unopened.

Switch off the media

TVs, radios, smart phones, laptops, video games - they all contribute to audiovisual clutter. Being flooded with stimuli, even entertaining stimuli, is a tremendous source of stress. Unplug and unhook yourself. At the very least, turn off the TV while you're on the phone, or turn off the phone when you're watching TV. If that's not enough, try a vacation from the TV news, the daily paper and news magazines. It can take a couple of weeks to adjust and get beyond the withdrawal effects. Eliminating the daily paper will also reduce the amount of paper coming in and cluttering up your home.

Clear your calendar

How often have you complained that there aren't enough hours in the day? It's not the clock that's the problem. It's the number of activities you're trying to pack in. Being too busy can become a habit so entrenched that it leads you to postpone or cut short what really matters to you, making you a slave to a lifestyle you don't even like. You may have so much going on that you don't have time to assess what matters most to you, let alone make time to do it. What can you do? Only say yes to activities you really care about. In other words, learn to say no. Remember,



it's easier to decline an invitation than to figure out how to get out of it later. If you need a reason for saying no, explain that you've promised your family you wouldn't take on any new activities. If you're involved in volunteer work or even a social group that you dread, get out of it. Think about how pleasant it would be to look at your calendar and find that all the don't-want-to-but-have-to commitments have been erased.

Stop multitasking

Your mind can also be cluttered, your attention spread too thin among too many tasks. Long touted as the mark of the highly efficient, multitasking has recently been revealed to be less of a boon than once thought. In fact, recent research shows that people who multitask tend to be less able to concentrate and more easily distracted than people who rarely multitask. Perhaps more importantly, multitasking doesn't let you get into the flow - a state of being so absorbed in an activity that nothing else seems to matter. When you're in the flow, also called in the zone, things seem to happen effortlessly. You're totally absorbed by what you're doing. There's no room in your awareness for conflicts or contradictions. Flow creates a sense of fulfillment and engagement, and even contentment.

So, try for more flow and less multitasking. Start by turning off the electronic distractions and focusing on one task. Only when you've completed that task can you go on to the next. Focusing on one task is also a good way to learn to be present - or totally engaged - in the moment. This is mindfulness. It doesn't get any simpler than that.

www.MayoClinic.com

ONLINE TOOLS FROM UNITEDHEALTHCARE

Learn more, get motivated and achieve your health goals with our online interactive tools:

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- Calories burned calculator
- Calcium calculator
- Healthy weight calculator
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- Adult food pyramid
- Target heart rate calculator
- Symptom checker
- Cost-of-smoking calculator

To get started, visit myuhc.com. Once you're logged in, select the "Health & Wellness" tab, and choose "Tools."

COMMIT TO BE FIT



WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE WORKOUT SONGS? WE ASKED; YOU TOLD!

Thanks to everyone who sent us their favorite tunes to listen to during a workout!

Burn it to the Ground, Nickelback

Anything from the new Black Keys album

Check My Brain, Alice in Chains

The music of Drake, Michael Jackson, Earth, Wind & Fire and anything by Tupac

I Got Feeling, Black Eyed Peas

Uprising, Muse

I Don't Wanna Stop, Ozzy Osbourne

So Whatcha Want, Beastie Boys

Anything by Tangerine Dream

Gotta Be Somebody, Nickelback

Da Dip Song, Nasty Freak

Cupid Shuffle, Cupid

You Light Up My Life, Debbie Boone

Bad Romance, Lady GaGa

REPELLENT: SAFETY TIPS

If you use an insect repellent, it's important to carefully follow the instructions on the label. Also:

Apply just enough to lightly coat the skin.

When you no longer need the repellent, wash it off with soap and water.

Don't use insect repellent on babies younger than age 2 months. For older children, don't use repellents that contain more than 10 percent DEET.

Don't apply to children's hands or around the eyes.

Use permethrin on clothing and gear — but never on the skin.

www.unitedhealthcare-hmhb.com



ACAI BERRY PRODUCTS: DO THEY HAVE HEALTH BENEFITS?

The acai (ah-sigh-EE) berry is a grape-like fruit harvested from acai palm trees, which are native to the rainforests of South America. Acai berries are widely touted as a so-called superfood, with proponents claiming that they are helpful for a variety of health concerns, including arthritis, cancer, weight loss, high cholesterol, erectile dysfunction, detoxification and improving general health.

Acai berries may be a good source of antioxidants, fiber and heart-healthy fats. But research on acai berries is limited, and claims about the health benefits of acai haven't been proved.

Many fruits besides acai berries provide antioxidants and other nutrients that are important to your health. But if you'd like to try acai, check your local health food or gourmet stores — it can be consumed raw, in tablet form, in beverages such as juice, smoothies or energy drinks, or in other food products such as jelly or ice cream.

Katherine Zeratsky, R.D., L.D., www.mayoclinic.com

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all Douglas County employees. EAP's trained staff can help you with problems that affect your personal or professional life. Services are free to employees and family members, and records are kept confidential and are not included in the staff member's personnel file. Call 593-1711 for an appointment.



HEALTH & WELLNESS PODCAST SERIES: NOW IS A GREAT TIME FOR A HEALTHIER YOU!

Maybe you want to lose a few pounds, build exercise into your daily routine, learn how to relax, or just live a longer, healthier life.

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UnitedHealthcare is pleased to offer a new Health & Wellness podcast series that's available whenever you are. Access one online today — on your lunch break, in between appointments, before bed, or whenever your busy schedule allows you a few minutes.

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To view the podcasts, go to <http://go.uhc.com/podcasts/uhc>.

To download podcasts to your computer, click on the question mark "Tools and Help," located on the bottom right of the presentation, then select "Download."

COMMIT TO BE FIT

STINSON PARK

Have you checked out Stinson Park at 67th and Center Street? The new park sits on 4.5 beautiful acres which includes a performance stage, a 100 foot tower, picnic shelters, and huge open green spaces. It's part of the new, exciting Aksarben Village development. The area has a rich history: the grounds were once the home to the Aksarben race track.

The Keystone bike trail runs near the park making it a great cycling destination or a relaxing place to break along the trail. Visit the Aksarben Village web site to keep up to date with the events hosted in the park: concerts, neighborhood events, festivals, and more! Don't miss this gem! www.aksarbenvillage.com



HEALTHY SHOPPING!

The farmers markets in the Omaha area offer a fun and festive way to purchase delicious fresh fruits, veggies, herbs, bedding plants, cut flowers, jams, jellies and more! For a list of markets in the Omaha area, visit the Douglas County Health Department's brochure display (just off the elevator on the 4th floor of the Civic Center building). Check the department's website over the next few weeks for new online information regarding community gardens and farmers markets: www.douglascountyhealth.com. **Happy shopping! Happy, healthy eating!**

HAVEN IN THE CITY

Heron Haven is a spring-fed wetland sanctuary offering nature trails and a boardwalk that are open to the public every day, free of charge. The sanctuary features one of the last oxbow wetlands of the Big Papillion Creek, and despite its location within Omaha's city limits, it provides visitors a peaceful refuge in which to study, observe, or merely enjoy the natural environment. So, take a walk on the wild side! Come and visit Heron Haven, whether for a quiet nature walk, for bird watching, nature photography, or to view the butterfly garden and prairie grass exhibit. 11809 Old Maple Rd. near 120th and West Maple Rd, 402-493-4303, hours: dawn to dusk daily, **free admission**, no pets, please.



GET ACTIVE!

WWW.ACTIVATEOMAHA.ORG!



It's a terrific resource for an active life! Click on Calender to see what's going on right here in our area. Here are a few events from the June calendar:

June, 20, 2010 – 8:15 AM - Hiking at Wilson Island State Recreation Area Wilson Island State Recreation Area encompasses 544 acres of dense cottonwood stands. It has approximately 5 miles of trails on flat land adjacent to the Missouri River. Please come prepared with adequate drinking water, sunscreen and bug spray for your personal use. We will hike for about 4 miles at a pace of 3 to 3.2 miles per hour. For more information, contact: Omaha Hiking Club
<http://members.cox.net/omahahikingclub/>

June, 26 2010 – 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM, City Sprouts Garden Work Day, 4002 Seward Street Weekly work parties at city sprouts are Wednesday evenings (5:30 - 8:00 P.M.) and Saturday mornings (9 AM - 1:00 P.M.) during the months of June, July, and August. For more information, call: 402-502-5902

We'd like to hear from you!

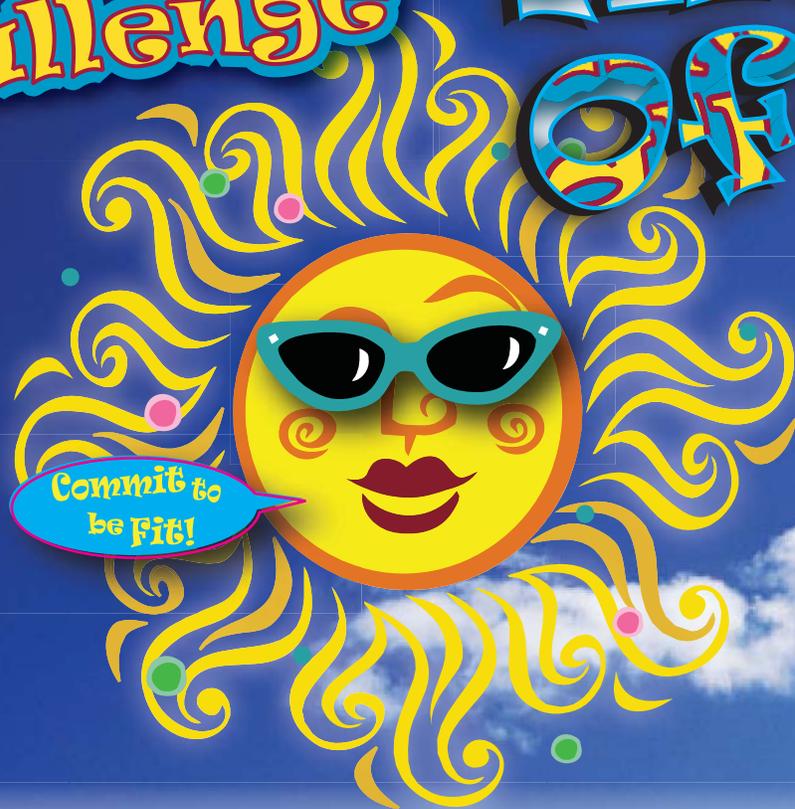
If you have a question or comment for the Healthy Directions committee, e-mail chairwoman Kathy Goodman at kathy.goodman@douglascounty-ne.gov, drop her a note to Human Resources, Rm 505, or call her at 444-6099.

The *Healthy Directions Wellness Newsletter* is brought to you by the Douglas County Healthy Directions worksite wellness committee. Contributing editor: Phil Rooney; layout and design: Connie Lehman; distribution: Sunday Uribe.

COMMIT TO BE FIT

**Summer
Wellness
Challenge**

**Kick
OFF!**



Don't Miss the Fun!

Join us for the Summer Wellness Challenge kick off!
Dr. Jason Wiese, founder of Life Source Chiropractic,
will host the lunch and learn

Living a Maximized Life

Gear up to make the first step in creating health in your
life! Overcome the obstacles and barriers created in the
past, and focus on creating a new future.

Health Center: June 16th, Town Hall, Noon and 1PM

Civic Center: June 23rd, Room 702 ,11:30 AM and 12:30 PM

**Make this your
healthiest summer ever!**



GET WEIGHT WATCHERS TO WORK FOR YOU

Whenever you're bored, stressed or running short on time, **Hungry** is right there tempting you with wrong food choices. Weight Watchers can help you change all that.

With **Weight Watchers At Work*** meetings, you can bring the power of Weight Watchers right to your workplace, so even the busiest professionals can attend and learn how to conquer Hungry once and for all.



Sign-up for the 17-week At Work meeting series today. You'll get everything you need to lose weight and keep it off plus 19 weeks of Weight Watchers eTools FREE**.

Weight Watchers At Work Meetings
Could be Held Here!
Douglas County
Interested?

Please contact: Diane Battiato, Register of Deeds @ 444-7457
or diane.battiato@douglascounty-ne.gov

Minimum Number of 20 Employees are Needed to Offer This Benefit

*Available in participating areas only. Minimum enrollment required.

**Unless you cancel before the end of your 19 Free weeks of eTools, you will automatically be billed \$12.95 for your next month.

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 **WeightWatchers®**

Stop Dieting. Start Living.