



# ALPINE *Threads*

Community and Family Life in the California Alps Spring 2025

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*Earth Day!*  
REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

— ♥ —

**Earth Day has been celebrated every April 22 since 1970. The first Earth Day saw 20 million Americans participate in rallies and demonstrations. In 1990, Earth Day became a global movement that engaged over 200 million people in 141 countries!**

— ♥ —

*Local Events*

**South Lake Tahoe Earth Day Festival - April 19**  
SouthTahoeEarthDay.org

**Tree Planting at Curtz Lake - April 25**  
RSVP to [AlpineWatershed@gmail.com](mailto:AlpineWatershed@gmail.com)

**Wá·šiw Earth Day - May 3**  
Facebook.com/WTEPD



# Wonderful Watershed Work:

## Call for Tree Planters and River Monitors

By California Climate Action Corps Climate Resiliency Fellow Kaitlyn Garber and Headwaters Coordinator Rachel Maurer with Alpine Watershed Group



Volunteers carefully plant a Jeffrey pine seedling on Arbor Day 2023.

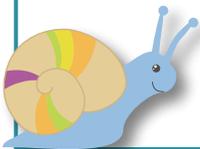
Alpine Watershed Group (AWG) is looking forward to Alpine County's third annual Arbor Day volunteer tree planting event, hosted by the Forest Health Community Working Group. Mark your calendars for Friday, April 25. Please join us at Curtz Lake Trailhead for a morning of reforestation and good company! Free lunch will be provided after the planting at Turtle Rock Park Community Center. RSVPs are required. Email [alpinewatershed@gmail.com](mailto:alpinewatershed@gmail.com) to RSVP. Please invite your friends! We look forward to seeing you then.

If you are looking for a recurring opportunity to volunteer in Alpine County, consider becoming an AWG river monitor. Volunteer monitoring of the Upper Carson River watershed has been part of AWG's programs for over two decades. This data

has contributed to our long-term dataset for the watershed and is also submitted to the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) for use by regulatory agencies when establishing water quality standards for water bodies. AWG holds a river monitor training annually to help new volunteers join the program and for existing volunteers to refresh their skills with AWG staff. While we do not yet have a date set for the 2025 training, keep an eye on our website homepage for the opportunity. It will likely be in June or July when river flows have decreased, and the weather has warmed up.

To download the Arbor Day flyer or learn more about the Forest Health Community Working Group, please visit [www.alpinecountyca.gov/699/Forest-Health-Community-Working-Group](http://www.alpinecountyca.gov/699/Forest-Health-Community-Working-Group).

For more information on AWG's river monitor program, visit the Monitoring page on AWG's website at [www.alpinewatershedgroup.org/monitoring](http://www.alpinewatershedgroup.org/monitoring) or email Headwaters Coordinator Rachel Maurer at [awg.rachel@gmail.com](mailto:awg.rachel@gmail.com).



Volunteers celebrate their hard work with raised shovels.



AWG volunteer river monitors collect water quality data along the West Fork Carson River.

### Alpine County Public Health is now on Facebook

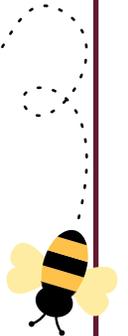


Like us and follow us for up to date information and tips about healthy living and emergency preparedness in beautiful Alpine County!



# ALPINE COUNTY BEAR BOX GRANT PROGRAM

ALPINE COUNTY, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE, IS OFFERING A BEAR BOX GRANT PROGRAM FOR HOMEOWNERS LOCATED ON THE EAST SLOPE OF ALPINE COUNTY.



## PROGRAM DETAILS:

UP TO \$2,200 AVAILABLE PER RESIDENCE FOR BOXES INSTALLED BEFORE MAY 31, 2025.

- APPLY ONLINE
- CHOOSE AN APPROVED CONTRACTOR
- INSTALL A BEAR BOX
- RECIEVE UP TO \$2,200 REIMBURSEMNT

**CONTACT THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AT:**

**OUR WEBSITE**  
[WWW.ALPIECOUNTYCA.GOV/738/BEAR-BOX-GRANT-PROGRAM](http://WWW.ALPIECOUNTYCA.GOV/738/BEAR-BOX-GRANT-PROGRAM)

**OUR EMAIL**  
[PLANNING@ALPIECOUNTYCA.GOV](mailto:PLANNING@ALPIECOUNTYCA.GOV)





# 2025 HEAP Income Guidelines



**AVAILABLE TO ALPINE COUNTY RESIDENTS!**



## HEAP Funds are Available

The El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) offers financial assistance to income eligible El Dorado County families pay their utility bills and improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

Households may qualify for assistance with their electric bill/natural gas, propane bill, oil, or the purchase of wood or pellets.



### 2025 Gross Monthly Income Guidelines:

Household Size

Max Monthly Income

**1**

**\$3,170.00**

**2**

**\$4,145.41**

**3**

**\$5,120.83**

**4**

**\$6,096.25**

**5**

**\$7,071.58**

**6**

**\$8,047.00**



For more information or to pick up an application,  
please call 530 573 3490 or visit the

**Health and Human Services Agency, HEAP Program 1**  
**360 Johnson Blvd. South Lake Tahoe, CA**  
**[www.eldoradocounty.ca.gov/heap](http://www.eldoradocounty.ca.gov/heap)**

# Stress Awareness .....

April is Stress Awareness month and as we approach the Spring season it is good to reflect on stress and how it impacts our daily lives. Stress affects everyone but it is important in how we deal with stress to ensure a positive outcome. We all experience stress in one way or another. The most common explanation of stress is physical, mental or emotional strain or tension. Having feelings of stress is normal when you are experiencing life changes. We can manage stressful symptoms and feelings by learning healthy ways to cope with stress.

## Some common reactions to stressful events can include:

- Feeling sad, frustrated, and helpless
- Difficulty making decisions and concentrating
- Headaches, body aches and stomach problems

## Understanding stress and how to deal with it is important. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, some healthy ways to deal with stress include:

- Taking a break, taking deep breaths and relaxing.
- Being active is important, you can take walks, stretch, or any physical activity that works for you.
- Connect with others by reaching out to family and friends.
- Daily routine that includes plenty of rest, exercise, and eating a healthy diet is key to overall health and relieving daily stress.
- Seeking help from a Professional if needed.



It is normal to feel stress from time to time but understanding how to manage it will help a person feel less stressed and more at ease with anything that comes our way.

**If you are having thoughts of suicide, do not hesitate to ask for help. Your life is extremely valuable, and people care about you. You are not alone. Call 988 to get in touch with trained counselors.**



They will listen, understand how your problems are affecting you, provide support, and connect you to resources. Another crisis line available to Alpine residents 24/7 is 1-800-318-8212. To see a clinician, call Alpine County Behavioral Health Services at 530-694-1816.

An advertisement for "THE MARKET AT MARKLEEVILLE". At the top, there is a colorful rainbow arching over two white clouds. Below the clouds, the text "EST. 2023" is flanked by two green leaves. The main title "THE MARKET" is in large, bold, brown letters with a white outline. Underneath, it says "AT MARKLEEVILLE" in smaller letters, followed by "10am to 2pm - Downtown". The dates are listed as "Saturday, May 31st...Saturday, June 28th", "Saturday, July 26th...Saturday, August 30th", and "Saturday, September 20th". At the bottom, it lists various activities: "FOOD - FARMERS - LIBATIONS - MUSIC - KIDS ACTIVITIES - ARTS - CRAFTS - BAKERY" and "FOOD TRUCKS - GOURMET ITEMS - AND...SOOOOOO MUCH MORE...SEE YOU THERE!". The phone number "775.392.4417" and website "Events@SierraChef.com" are also included. The bottom of the ad has the text "Be Tobacco Free - Alpine County" on both sides.

An advertisement for "The Health &amp; Wellness Coalition". The background is a light blue and green watercolor texture. The text "The Health &amp; Wellness Coalition is seeking new members!" is written in a large, elegant, black cursive font. Below this, it says "To learn more or sign up, contact Kari at kmoore@alpinecountycagov or 530-694-2235". At the bottom right, there is a logo with three overlapping shapes (blue, green, orange) and the text "Live Healthy! ALPINE COUNTY Health &amp; Wellness COALITION".

**Children's brains absorb new information every day, especially when they're playing.** Combining fun and play with learning opportunities is a great way to support your child's brain development and growth. These math games give you a chance to have fun together while helping your child learn age-appropriate math skills.

For toddlers and preschoolers, early math skills are all about counting, sorting, organizing, and recognizing patterns and shapes.

Around 1–2 years old, toddlers begin to understand what numbers mean and can often show how old they are by holding up the correct number of fingers. They also begin to understand comparisons, such as “more,” “less,” and “faster.” Many start recognizing simple shapes and some patterns.



By preschool age, around 3–4 years old, children begin identifying shapes in the real world with guidance and encouragement from caregivers or teachers. For example, you might tell them that the book is a rectangle or the plate is round. When you ask them later what shape those objects are, preschoolers can often remember the correct shapes. They often begin sorting things by similar shape, color, size, and other characteristics. Counting becomes more consistent, with many preschoolers able to count up to 20 without skipping numbers. They might also understand how to put simple puzzles together on their own.

By kindergarten, around age 5, children's counting skills expand to be able to count on two hands and identify the larger of two numbers. They begin to understand concepts like symmetry, and they can recognize more complex patterns. Time becomes more clear, with many kindergarteners understanding the difference between morning and night. At this age, they can follow multistep instructions with words like “first,” “next,” and “last.”

You can adjust these fun math games to make them harder for your older child or easier for your younger child. To make them more difficult, create more complex patterns, or encourage your child to count higher.

- **Count Your Jumps:** This game is sure to get the giggles going! In an openspace like a larger room or a park, encourage your child to jump in place and count each of their jumps out loud. If they still have energy left (they probably do), you can ask them if they think they can beat their previous jump number. An extra bonus: Studies have shown that combining physical exercise and learning increases brain development and memory.
- **The Great Toy Sort:** Not only is this a fun math game, but it can also be used to encourage your child to pick up their toys! To play, ask your child to sort their toys based on something they all have in common, but they can't tell you what the toys have in common—you have to guess! Then, have them place those toys in a toy chest or line them up on the ground while you guess what their common characteristic is. To make this game more difficult, swap roles and have them guess how you're sorting their toys.
- **Find Shapes Everywhere:** The perfect game for riding in the car, Find Shapes Everywhere encourages your child to look for simple shapes like triangles, circles, squares, and rectangles in the objects all around them. If they need a little help, you can try pointing out an object like a road sign and ask them what shape they think that is. To increase the difficulty, challenge your child to look for a specific shape, like a circle, and to tell you when they see it.
- **Time's Up—Freeze!** For this game, tell your child they can dance, jump, sing, or do any safe activity they want until the timer goes off. When they hear the timer ding, they have to freeze in place until you release them. As you're playing the game, give them different warnings, like “You have two seconds left!” or “Freezing in 10 seconds” so they can start to connect numbers with time.
- **This Then That:** This game helps your child learn how to follow multistep instructions by looking for words like “first,” “second,” “next,” and “last.” To play, give your child a growing list of silly instructions. Start out with just one step, like “touch your nose.” When they do that, add another step. For example, tell them to first touch their nose and then hop on one foot. See how many steps you can keep adding!

*Actual article link: <https://www.first5california.com/en-us/activities/making-math-fun-5-activities-for-you-and-your-child/>*

For more information from First 5 Alpine- check out [www.first5alpine.org](http://www.first5alpine.org) or contact Executive Director, Amy Broadhurst, call: 530-694-2230 ext. 224, email: [abroadhurst@alpinecountyca.gov](mailto:abroadhurst@alpinecountyca.gov) or stop by the office located on Diamond Valley Elementary School campus, in the District Office.



# THIRDHAND SMOKE:

## The Hidden Health Risk



### What Is Thirdhand Smoke?

While most people are aware of the dangers of **firsthand** (direct smoking) and **secondhand smoke** (exposure to smoke exhaled by others), fewer realize that the toxic residues left behind on surfaces—**thirdhand smoke**—can pose a serious health risk. Thirdhand smoke refers to the lingering chemicals from tobacco products that settle on furniture, walls, clothes, and other surfaces long after the cigarette has been put out.

### Where Does Thirdhand Smoke Come From?

When a person smokes, nicotine and other chemicals in tobacco smoke settle onto surfaces and mix with environmental pollutants like ozone or nitrous acid, forming new toxic compounds. These chemicals don't simply disappear; they accumulate over time, becoming embedded in household dust, fabrics, and even human skin.

### Health Risks of Thirdhand Smoke

Emerging research shows that thirdhand smoke exposure may be linked to various health problems:

1. **Respiratory Issues** – Infants and children who crawl on contaminated carpets or touch tainted surfaces are at risk of inhaling or absorbing toxins through their skin, potentially leading to asthma and other respiratory issues.
2. **Cancer Risk** – Thirdhand smoke contains carcinogenic substances like tobacco-specific nitrosamines (TSNAs), which can increase cancer risk even at low exposure levels (Matt et al., 2011).
3. **Liver and DNA Damage** – Studies on mice suggest that exposure to thirdhand smoke can lead to DNA damage, oxidative stress, and liver dysfunction (Hang et al., 2013).
4. **Increased Risk for Non-Smokers** – Even if a person has never smoked, they can still be affected by toxic residues left behind on walls, furniture, and vehicles (Thomas et al., 2014).

### Who Is Most Vulnerable?

- **Infants and young children** – They tend to put their hands in their mouths and have prolonged contact with contaminated surfaces.
- **Pregnant women** – Exposure to tobacco residues may pose developmental risks for unborn babies.
- **Non-smoking family members** – Living with smokers increases the chances of coming into contact with thirdhand smoke, even if they don't smoke themselves.

### How to Reduce Thirdhand Smoke Exposure

- **Avoid indoor smoking completely** – Opening windows or using air purifiers cannot eliminate thirdhand smoke residues.
- **Wash walls, carpets, and furniture** – Residues accumulate on surfaces, so regular deep cleaning is necessary.
- **Launder clothes and bedding frequently** – Smoking around fabrics allows toxins to embed in them.
- **Repaint walls and replace contaminated furniture** – In extreme cases, replacing porous materials may be the only way to remove long-lasting smoke residues.

Thirdhand smoke is a largely invisible but dangerous byproduct of tobacco use. While smoking bans have helped reduce secondhand smoke exposure, thirdhand smoke lingers in environments long after smoking has stopped. Taking proactive measures to clean contaminated surfaces and completely eliminate indoor smoking is crucial to protecting the health of non-smokers, especially vulnerable individuals like children and pregnant women.



## ALPINE THREADS EDITORIAL BOARD

### First 5 Alpine

75 Diamond Valley Road  
PH: 530-694-2235 ext. 227  
[www.alpinecountyca.gov/523/  
First-5-Alpine](http://www.alpinecountyca.gov/523/First-5-Alpine)

### Alpine County Health and Human Services

75 B Diamond Valley Rd.  
PH: 530-694-2146  
FAX: 530-694-2252

### The Learning Center and Local Child Care Planning Council

100 Foothill Rd.  
PH: 530-694-1148

### WEBSITE LINKS

[www.alpinecountyca.gov/calendar](http://www.alpinecountyca.gov/calendar)  
[www.alpinecountyca.gov/523/  
First-5-Alpine](http://www.alpinecountyca.gov/523/First-5-Alpine)  
[www.alpinecounty.com](http://www.alpinecounty.com)  
[www.alpinewatershedgroup.org](http://www.alpinewatershedgroup.org)  
[www.alpinebiomasscommittee.  
wordpress.com](http://www.alpinebiomasscommittee.wordpress.com)  
[www.spnawareness.org/](http://www.spnawareness.org/)



*Disclaimer: This wellness-focused publication is not intended to provide timely news and/or personal, political or discriminatory statements. Alpine Threads Editorial Board reviews all content.*

## ALPINE THREADS

75 B Diamond Valley Rd.  
Markleeville, CA 96120  
Phone: (530) 694-2146

*Addressing the needs of the  
Alpine County Community*

# Healthy Eating, in a SNAP!

## Pasta Ratatouille



Serves: 9

## Ingredients

- 8 ounces uncooked pasta (try rotini, penne or bow tie noodles)
- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- ½ cup chopped onion (½ medium onion)
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped or ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 medium green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 small zucchini, cubed
- 1 small eggplant, cubed
- 2 medium tomatoes, cubed
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1 cup shredded cheese

## Directions:

Rinse or scrub fresh vegetables under running water before preparing.  
Cook pasta according to package directions.  
Drain and set aside.  
Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat (300 degrees F in an electric skillet). Add onion and garlic and cook until soft.

Add bell pepper, zucchini, and eggplant.  
Cook about 10 to 12 minutes.  
Stir in tomatoes, salt, black pepper and basil.  
Cook another 2 to 4 minutes or until heated through.  
Serve over pasta and top with cheese.  
Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.



Connect with us!



*For more recipes, borrow SNAP-Ed cookbooks from the Library  
and the Woodfords Indian Education Center.*