

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact Julie Beeman
Family Resource Management and Entrepreneurship Agent, Wildcat Extension District
juliesmith@ksu.edu (620) 331-2690

Hidden Costs of Summer

Summer brings family vacations, backyard barbecues, and opportunities to make lasting memories. While many people look forward to summer, it can also quietly strain household budgets. Small expenses can add up quickly, leaving families wondering where their money went.

Here are three hidden costs of summer and ways to keep them from derailing your finances.

First, entertainment spending adds up. Summer often means more opportunities to spend money. Trips to the pool, amusement parks, fairs, movies, sporting events, and restaurants can quickly become routine. Individually, these expenses may seem reasonable, but together they can take a significant bite out of a family's budget. Try to plan ahead and look for free or low-cost community activities such as library programs, concerts in the park, local festivals, and outdoor recreation opportunities. You can still enjoy summer without overspending.

Next, as temperatures climb, so do energy costs. Air conditioners work harder during the summer months, leading to higher electric bills. Additional water uses for gardening, lawn care, and outdoor activities can also increase household expenses. Simple changes can help reduce costs. Raising the thermostat a few degrees, using ceiling fans, closing blinds during the hottest part of the day, and watering lawns during cooler morning hours can all help manage utility expenses. Small adjustments may not seem significant, but they can make a noticeable difference over the course of the summer.

Finally, one of the highest hidden costs of summer is the tendency to relax spending habits. Vacations create a mindset of splurging and treating ourselves. Unfortunately, this spending can continue long after the trip is over. Before traveling, create a realistic budget that includes meals, souvenirs, fuel, lodging, and unexpected expenses. If possible, save for vacation costs in advance rather than relying on credit cards. Returning home without additional debt can make those summer memories even sweeter.

By paying attention to entertainment costs, utility bills, and vacation spending habits, families can enjoy the best parts of the season while staying on track financially. Planning ahead can help ensure the memories of summer last longer than the bills.

For more information, contact Julie Beeman at (620) 331-2690 or by emailing juliesmith@ksu.edu.

#

K-State Extension is a short name for the Kansas State University Cooperative Extension Service, a program designed to generate and distribute useful knowledge for the wellbeing of Kansans. Supported by county, state, federal and private funds, the program has county extension offices statewide. Its headquarters is on the K-State campus in Manhattan. For more information, visit www.ksre.ksu.edu.

K-State Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer