



MOBILE FOOD MARKET

FREE FOOD MONTHLY

THURSDAY JANUARY 15 BEGINS AT 10AM

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FRESH VEGETABLES, FRUIT & BREAD (IF AVAILABLE)

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Career And College Promise Information Session Set For January 26

Career and College Promise can help students get a jump start on college classes while still in high school. The Career and College Promise (CCP) program at South Piedmont Community College offers eligible North Carolina high school students the opportunity to earn college credit tuition-free before graduation.

The CCP program provides multiple pathways designed to match students' individual goals, whether they plan to continue on to a four-year college or enter the workforce after high school. Depending on the pathway and qualifications, students may earn a certificate, complete their first year of college, or even earn a two-year degree with qualifying unweighted GPAs.

An information session will be held virtually on Monday, January 26, at 6 p.m. via Microsoft Teams. During the session, participants will learn about CCP pathways, eligibility requirements, steps to enrollment, course load expectations, instructional formats, accommodations, technology used at SPCC, and the benefits of the program, along with other helpful details.

The session will also explain the difference between working with a career coach and a high school counselor and how each supports students throughout the process.

Students and families interested in learning more about how Career and College Promise can open doors to college and career opportunities are encouraged to attend the virtual session.

Information and registration are available using the QR Code.



Radon Testing Encouraged For Homes And Wells In Anson County

Anson County residents are being encouraged to test both indoor air and private well water for radon and other radionuclides, according to information from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Radon is a naturally occurring gas found in rocks and soil across North Carolina and is created as uranium in the ground breaks down. Because radon cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted, testing is the only way to know if it is present at unsafe levels indoors or in drinking water.

Health officials recommend testing the indoor air of homes, apartments, and commercial buildings every two years. Radon buildup indoors is a leading cause of lung cancer, particularly when exposure occurs over long periods of time. If indoor radon levels measure between 2.0 and 3.9 picoCuries per liter of air, residents are advised to consider hiring a certified radon professional to reduce levels. If levels reach 4.0 picoCuries per liter or higher, mitigation is strongly recommended to make indoor air safer to breathe.

Certain groups face higher risks from radon exposure. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that people who smoke or who are exposed to secondhand smoke and radon are 25 times more likely to develop lung cancer. Children are also especially vulnerable, with studies showing they are twice as likely as adults to be affected by radon exposure. When children are exposed to both tobacco smoke and elevated radon levels, their lung cancer risk increases at least 20 times.

Testing private well water is also strongly encouraged for Anson County residents who rely on wells for drinking water. The Division of Public Health recommends testing well water for radon, uranium, gross alpha, and gross beta. Exposure to radionuclides through drinking water has been linked to several health effects, including stomach cancer from radon, kidney damage and cancer from uranium, and bone cancer from radium. If radon levels in well water exceed 4,000 picoCuries per liter, installation of a treatment system by a certified professional is recommended.

Owners of large buildings and mid- to high-rise condominiums are also urged to consider radon testing. According to the CDC, construction materials such as sandstone, concrete, brick, natural stone, gypsum, and granite can contain naturally occurring radioactive elements. Testing is the only way to determine whether these materials are contributing to elevated indoor radon levels.

More information about radon testing, mitigation, and health risks is available through the North Carolina Radon Program at radon.ncdohhs.gov.

North Carolina's November Employment Figures

North Carolina's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for November 2025 was 3.8 percent, according to figures released by state labor officials. The national unemployment rate stood at 4.6 percent. October 2025 data were unavailable due to a lapse in appropriations.

The state's unemployment rate increased by one-tenth of a percentage point compared to November 2024. Over the year, the number of people employed rose by 5,325, while the number of unemployed individuals increased by 7,465.

Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment increased by 3,300 jobs in November, bringing statewide employment to 5,119,900. Gains were reported in Construction, up 1,900 jobs; Leisure and Hospitality Services, up 1,600; Professional and Business Services, up 1,600; Trade, Transportation and Utilities, up 1,200; Financial Activities, up 800; Other Services, up 300; and Information, up 200.

Job losses during the month were recorded in Private Education and Health Services, down 3,400; Government, down 400; Manufacturing, down 400; and Mining and Logging, down 100.

Since November 2024, total nonfarm employment in North Carolina has increased by 87,900 jobs. The private sector accounted for 87,200 of those gains, while government employment rose by 700. Over the year, major job increases occurred in Professional and Business Services, up 20,100; Private Education and Health Services, up 19,000; Leisure and Hospitality Services, up 14,800; Construction, up 14,500; Trade, Transportation and Utilities, up 13,800; Financial Activities, up 6,800; Other Services, up 4,700; Government, up 700; and Mining and Logging, up 200.

Manufacturing employment declined by 5,700 jobs over the year, while Information services fell by 1,000. State officials note that all employment estimates are subject to monthly and annual revisions, and that the absence of October data limits month-to-month comparisons for late 2025.

Children's Oral Health Declines Across North Carolina After Pandemic

Kindergarten dental decay reaches highest level in 5 years, state data shows

The oral health of North Carolina's youngest students has declined sharply in the years following the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new data brief from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services' Oral Health Section. Statewide screening data shows untreated dental decay among kindergartners is now at its highest level in at least five years, reversing progress made prior to the pandemic.

The report, based on results from the state's Basic Screening Survey of kindergartners, points to pandemic-related disruptions as a major factor. Temporary closures of dental offices and schools limited access to routine dental care and school-based oral health services, leaving many children without preventive treatments such as sealants, fluoride applications, and screenings.

Dental decay remains one of the most common chronic childhood diseases, despite being largely preventable. State health officials note that untreated cavities can significantly affect a child's overall health, school performance, and quality of life, particularly for children from low-income families and racially or ethnically marginalized communities.

Data from the most recent screening period shows nearly one in five kindergartners statewide has untreated tooth decay, while rates of treated decay and children with no history of cavities have fallen to their lowest levels in five years. The report also highlights ongoing disparities, with some racial and ethnic groups experiencing significantly higher rates of untreated decay than others.

School-based oral health programs play a critical role in addressing these gaps, particularly for children who may not otherwise see a dentist. For many students, school screenings are the only opportunity to identify urgent dental needs and connect families with care, the report notes.

State oral health officials say continued monitoring and expanded preventive services will be essential to prevent further decline. While COVID-19 may no longer dominate daily life, the report warns that its lingering effects on children's oral health could have long-term consequences if not addressed through coordinated public health and education efforts.

Local Dentist Marshville Family Dentistry is conveniently located on the east side of Marshville, and they are a family friendly, full service practice. They accept many insurances, and offer their own affordable in-house insurance plan. You can call them for more information or to make an appointment at 704-624-6300. The address is 7260 East Marshville Boulevard (Highway 74) in Marshville. Coming from Anson County, they are on the left, before you reach Food Lion.

Plans to Help Others with \$2 Million Powerball Win

Pegi Campbell of Cramerton plans to give back to her community after a \$3 Powerball ticket turned into a \$2 million prize. "I will make sure it gets used for good," Campbell said.

Campbell said she intends to donate to several local charities and provide assistance to a domestic violence shelter in her region. "We can help a lot of people with this," she said.

Campbell purchased her lucky Quick Pick ticket for the December 13 drawing at the Food Lion on South New Hope Road in Gastonia. She matched all five white balls to win \$1 million, and because she added Power Play, her prize doubled to \$2 million when the 2X multiplier was drawn. "It was just a spur-of-the-moment thing to buy it," Campbell said.

She arrived Monday to claim her winnings and, after required federal and state tax withholdings, took home \$1,440,201. "Wow, that's a lot of money," Campbell said.

Powerball is one of six draw games in North Carolina where players can purchase tickets at a retail location or through Online Play using the lottery's website or the NC Lottery Official Mobile App.

More information on how lottery funds have benefited all 100 North Carolina counties is available at www.nclottery.com by clicking on the "Impact" section of the website.