



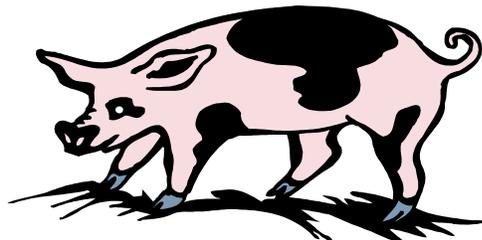
**CRAVEN COUNTY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**



**WORKING TOGETHER
FOR YOUR HEALTH.**

Petting Zoos Pose Hazards!

Thousands of children are being exposed to dangerous E. Coli bacteria at petting zoos and county fairs. The Centers of Disease Control cited outbreaks of infection by the Escherichia coli bacteria last year that sickened 56 people, including dozens of children, at a dairy farm and a petting zoo. The children touched goats, cows, chickens and other farm animals, then put their hands to their mouths, either by eating, drinking, chewing their fingernails or sucking on pacifiers. Handwashing facilities should be provided. In the



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absence of handwashing facilities at the petting zoo or dairy farm, escort children to the nearest toilet for proper handwashing or construct a make shift handwashing station using a large coffee pot with a spigot and use a trash can underneath to catch the waste water or use a pan, soap and single use towels. The E. Coli bacteria is commonly found in the gut of human and other vertebrates. Symptoms include fever, vomiting and severe diarrhea. About 70,000 cases of E. Coli infection are reported in the United States annually, about 100 of them fatal. Transmission usually comes through food and water, but exposure to animals is also a significant risk. High risk visitors like children, the elderly and pregnant women should use extra caution.

Handwashing is the single most important means to prevent the spread of infection!!