



Cotton County Health Department

**For Immediate Release**

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**Cotton County Health Department Urges Caution to Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning**

Recent weather events and resulting power outages in Oklahoma have prompted many to seek alternative fuel and power sources such as grills, camp stoves or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices.

The Cotton County Health Department cautions that these devices should never be used inside a home, **garage**, or camper -- or even outside near an open window, vent or door. Combustion fumes created by the use of these alternative fuel or electricity sources can cause carbon monoxide to build up in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces and poison people and animals inside.

“Carbon monoxide can kill you or make you sick within minutes,” said Cotton County Health Department Administrative Director Brandie O’Connor. “If you use one of these devices, place outside as far as possible from windows, doors and vents.”

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas found in combustion fumes produced by small gasoline engines, stoves, generators, lanterns, gas ranges, or by burning charcoal or wood. Exposure to carbon monoxide can cause loss of consciousness and even death. Every year more than 500 Americans die from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning.

“Get out of the house and seek immediate medical help if you or a family member has symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning,” O’Connor said. “Symptoms include dizziness, fatigue, nausea, headache, vomiting, chest pain, confusion, and loss of consciousness. People who are sleeping or who have been drinking can die from carbon monoxide poisoning before ever having symptoms.”

O’Connor reminded area citizens that every home should have at least one working carbon monoxide detector. The detector's batteries should be checked twice annually, at the same time smoke detector batteries are checked.

For more information on carbon monoxide poisoning, check out this Web site from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov/co/> or call the Cotton County Health Department at 580-875-6121.

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