



PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PREVENTION OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

Last night's deaths and casualties in the Royal City area and caused by carbon monoxide poisoning are a reminder for all citizens to use extreme caution when using alternative heating and power sources this winter.

To enhance citizen awareness, Grant County Emergency Management offers the following information:

- 1. Carbon monoxide is a poisonous and odorless gas. It cannot be seen or smelled and it can kill a person in minutes.**
Carbon monoxide is produced whenever any fuel such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood, or charcoal is burned. If appliances that burn fuel are maintained and used properly, the amount of carbon monoxide produced is usually not hazardous. Unfortunately, hundreds of people die accidentally every year from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by appliances that are not used properly or that are malfunctioning. Even more people die from carbon monoxide produced from idling cars. Carbon monoxide can build up so quickly that victims are overcome before they can get help.

Once inhaled, carbon monoxide:

- Decreases the capacity of blood to carry oxygen;
- Can cause permanent brain damage; and
- Can cause chest pains or heart attacks in people with heart disease.

- 2. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning** include: headache, dizziness, fatigue, weakness, confusion, and nausea.

- 3. Citizens can reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning by following the following advice:**

- Never use gasoline powered equipment *indoors*. "**Adequate ventilation**" is required when using gasoline-powered equipment. It can be difficult to determine how much ventilation is "adequate"; **therefore, always use this kind of equipment outdoors!**
- Never operate or burn charcoal inside homes, tents, campers, vans, trucks, garages, or mobile homes. Do not burn charcoal in the fireplace in your home.
- Never use a gas oven to heat your home, even for a short time.
- Never idle a car in a garage, even when the garage door is open.
- Never sleep in a room while using an unvented gas or kerosene heater.
- Make sure that chimneys and flues are in good condition and are not blocked.
- Have oil and gas appliances and fireplaces as well as wood stoves checked every year by a trained professional.
- Carbon monoxide warning devices may provide additional protection, but should not replace the other prevention steps.

- 4. If you suspect someone has been poisoned by carbon monoxide:**

- Move the person to a place with fresh air *immediately*. **However, do not risk your life while doing so** – entering the carbon monoxide-filled environment can kill you as well. If in doubt, wait for the fire department to arrive and let them make the rescue.
- **Call 9-1-1 immediately** and tell them that you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning.

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