

The New Jersey Poison Information & Education System — Serving New Jersey Since 1983

## NEWS RELEASE

Media to contact:  
800-222-1222  
800-962-1253 if outside NJ

For Immediate Release  
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### **Poisoning Exposures Increase When the Power is Out** Poison Control Experts are Available to Help NJ Residents, 24/7/365

**BREAKING NEWS:** New Jersey is still experiencing power outages after Monday's intense storms. Power outages and flooding significantly increase health risks such as medicine contamination/safety, carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, food poisoning, medicine errors, mistaken identity mishaps, etc.

Every minute counts in poisoning situations – Do Not Guess! If you have questions or concerns about something you ate, touched or smelled, immediately contact the medical professionals at the [New Jersey Poison Control Center](#), 1-800-222-1222. You may call, [text](#), or [chat](#) with our professionals for free, 24/7. Save the Poison Help line in your phone today to be prepared for what may happen tomorrow. **If someone is unconscious, not breathing, hard to wake up, or seizing, call 9-1-1 immediately.**

"Carbon monoxide poisoning is an immediate and deadly danger no matter the season and especially after bad weather," says Bruce Ruck, Pharm.D., Managing Director of the [NJ Poison Control Center](#) at [Rutgers New Jersey Medical School's Department of Emergency Medicine](#). "Don't be the poison center's next statistic, act fast if you suspect CO poisoning. Carbon monoxide is a gas that gives no warning – you can't see it, smell it or taste it."

#### **Safety tips to help reduce your risk of carbon monoxide exposure:**

1. Only use generators outside. Keep them more than 20 feet from both you and your neighbor's home, doors, windows, and open garages.
2. Do not bring generators, pressure washers, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside your home, basement, garage, carport, camper, boat cabin, or tent – or even outside near an open window or door.
3. If you do not have any carbon monoxide detectors, install them right away. If your detectors are old and/or not working properly, replace them immediately.
4. Do not remove the batteries from detectors to use somewhere else. The detector can only save lives if it works.
5. Open flues when fireplaces are in use. Have chimneys inspected periodically to prevent blockage.
6. Do not cook with charcoal indoors.
7. Do not idle a car in a closed garage. Once you pull in, immediately turn off the engine. Be extra careful with "remote start" engines which may be on without your knowledge.

#### **If you suspect a carbon monoxide exposure, take immediate action:**

1. If someone is unconscious or unresponsive, get him or her out of the house and call 9-1-1 immediately.

2. Exit the house/building immediately. Do not waste time opening windows. This will delay your escape and cause you to breathe in even more dangerous fumes.
3. Contact your local fire department/energy provider.
4. Call the NJ Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 for immediate medical treatment advice. Do not waste time looking for information on the internet about carbon monoxide poisoning. Call us for fast, free and accurate information.

### **Help is Just a Phone Call Away!**

Stay Connected: Facebook ([@NJPIES](#)) and Twitter ([@NJPoisonCenter](#)) for breaking news, safety tips, trivia questions, etc.

### **Real People. Real Answers.**

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#### **Available for Media Interviews**

Diane P. Calello, MD, Executive and Medical Director, New Jersey Poison Control Center, Rutgers NJ Medical School's Department of Emergency Medicine

Bruce Ruck, Pharm.D., Managing Director, New Jersey Poison Control Center, Rutgers NJ Medical School's Department of Emergency Medicine

#### **About New Jersey Poison Control Center / NJPIES**

Chartered in 1983, the New Jersey Poison Information & Education System (NJPIES) is New Jersey's only poison control center. Medical professionals such as physicians, registered nurses and pharmacists offer free consultation through hotline services (telephone, text and chat) regarding poison emergencies and provide information on poison prevention, drugs, food poisoning, animal bites and more. In addition, it tracks incidences of adverse reactions to food, drugs and vaccines in order to monitor potential public health issues and provide data to the New Jersey Department of Health, U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NJPIES' confidential services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year. When needed, NJPIES responds to other emergent health issues by expanding hotline services.

NJPIES is designated as the state's regional poison control center by the New Jersey Department of Health and the American Association of Poison Control Centers. It is a division of the Department of Emergency Medicine of Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. NJPIES has a state-of-the-art center located at Rutgers Health Sciences in Newark. NJPIES is funded, in part, by the NJ Department of Health, NJ Hospitals and the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

New Jersey residents should save the Poison Help number, 1-800-222-1222, in their mobile phones and post the number somewhere visible in their home. NJPIES is also available via text [8002221222@njpies.org](mailto:8002221222@njpies.org) and chat [www.njpies.org](http://www.njpies.org).

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#### **About Rutgers New Jersey Medical School**

Founded in 1954, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School is the oldest school of medicine in the state. Today it is part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and graduates approximately 170 physicians a year. In addition to providing the MD degree, the school offers MD/PhD, MD/MPH and MD/MBA degrees through collaborations with other institutions of higher education. Dedicated to excellence in education, research, clinical care and community outreach, the medical school comprises 20 academic departments and works with several healthcare partners, including its principal teaching hospital, University Hospital. Its faculty consists of numerous world-renowned scientists and many of the region's "top doctors." Home to the nation's oldest student-run clinic, New Jersey Medical School hosts more than 50 centers and institutes, including the Public Health Research Institute Center, the Global Tuberculosis Institute and the Neurological Institute of New Jersey. For more information please visit: [njms.rutgers.edu](http://njms.rutgers.edu).

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