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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OKALOOSA RESIDENTS URGED TO PROTECT HEALTH DURING THIS WEEK'S FREEZING TEMPERATURES

OKALOOSA COUNTY – The Okaloosa County Health Department urges residents and visitors to take precautions to remain safe and healthy during this week's freezing temperatures.

Remember the "Five P's" of cold weather safety:

Protect People, Protect Plants, Protect Pets, Protect Exposed Pipes, & Practice Fire Safety.

Protect Loved Ones:

- Stay indoors and use safe heating sources. If you must be outdoors, stay dry and in wind-protected areas. Wear multiple layers of loose-fitting, warm clothing.
- Check on elderly neighbors who live alone and may need help winterizing their homes.
- Monitor young children or the chronically ill who cannot care for themselves to ensure that they are dressed warmly enough.
- Remain hydrated by drinking plenty of water.
- If you must travel, inform a friend or relative of your proposed route and expected time of arrival. Carry a cell phone.
- Shelter or bring inside animals, especially pets. If you cannot bring them inside, provide an adequate warm shelter, and unfrozen water to drink.

Prevent Fires and Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning:

- Be aware of the fire danger from space heaters and candles, and keep such devices away from all flammable materials such as curtains and furniture.
- Install (or check) batteries in smoke and CO detectors (you should have at least one of each per floor in your home.) Symptoms of CO poisoning include: headache, nausea, and disorientation.
- Do not use charcoal, kerosene, propane, diesel, or other fuel-burning devices in your home. Electric space heaters do not generate CO.
- Keep grills and generators out of the house and garage. If you lose power, position generators at least 25 feet from the house.
 - Prepare for outages by stocking food that does not need cooking/refrigerating and have water stored in clean containers.
 - Keep an up-to-date emergency kit including: battery-operated devices (flash light, weather radio, and lamps,) extra batteries, first-aid kit and extra medicine, baby items, and sand or cat litter – to spread on icy sidewalks.

For more information on the Florida Division of Emergency Management and to 'GET A PLAN!', visit: www.FloridaDisaster.org. All students, teachers and parents can find educational information and free downloadable materials at: www.KidsGetAPlan.com.

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