



Office of the Washington County Sheriff

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Press Release

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Homeowners hospitalized after carbon monoxide poisoning

LAKELAND, Minn. – Two people were rushed to the hospital Monday morning for carbon monoxide poisoning after using a gas-powered generator in their garage during a power outage.

Just before 10:30 a.m., Washington County deputies responded to a welfare check at a Lakeland residence after the homeowners failed to answer the door for a regularly scheduled appointment. The home was reportedly without power since Saturday and the two had not been heard from since Sunday night. A responding deputy detected a strong smell of exhaust from the open service door in the attached garage. Upon closer inspection, a gas-powered generator was found running in the garage near the screen door leading inside. A man and a woman were located unconscious in the home with an empty propane heater in the living room. Deputies rushed to carry the two outside where additional first responders took over medical care.

The victims, a 71-year-old male and 69-year-old female, were transported to the hospital for treatment where their condition remains unknown. A deputy was treated on-scene for carbon monoxide exposure and released.

This incident serves as a reminder of the importance of generator safety and necessary precautions when using gas-powered devices. Carbon monoxide is an odorless and colorless gas that can cause sudden illness or death when inhaled in large amounts. Generators, propane heaters, and other gas-powered warming devices can produce this dangerous gas if not used safely. These devices should always be used outdoors or in well-ventilated areas and away from windows, doors, and vents. It is important to have working carbon monoxide detectors in your home to alert you of any dangerous levels of gas. If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, you should immediately move to fresh air and seek medical attention.

Visit the [Outage Safety | Outage Checklist Website](#) for tips from Xcel Energy on what to do during a power outage and how to keep your home and family safe.

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