

# Urban Forestry Conference Coming to Region

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture Food and Forestry and the Oklahoma Urban & Community Forestry Council (OUCFC) are sponsoring the 2006 Urban Forestry Conference on Feb. 16-17, 2006. The two-day conference will be held at the Clarion Meridian Hotel and Convention Center, 737 S. Meridian in Oklahoma City.

The theme for this year's conference is "What Happened to my Tree?" It will focus on challenges facing urban trees and urban tree care professionals, and offer ideas and techniques for arborists, tree advocates and homeowners. The theme derives from sentiment most often muttered by the public when trees become involved in property disputes with municipalities, right-of-way acquisition and utility lines.

ACOG participated in planning sessions for the conference and encourages member communities to attend.

Carrie Tomlinson, urban forester with the City of Edmond and OUCFC chairwoman, will preside over the first day's welcome breakfast that features Dr. Halley Dozier, Louisiana State University, who will speak about trees in the aftermaths of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Breakout sessions on Day One will focus on developing local tree boards, tree diseases, grant funding opportunities and tree appraisal. John Burwell, Oklahoma State Forester, is the [invited] luncheon keynote speaker on the topic of the state's recent wildfires. The first day concludes with sessions on municipal tree preservation ordinances, tree planting costs and other topics. The second day starts off with a panel discussion on urban trees and utilities, and will present viewpoints from utility companies, home-



owners and communities. The second day also features sessions on landscape ordinances, the Survivor Tree at the Oklahoma City National Memorial, funding tree partnerships, utility pruning and why cities need tree care professionals.

There are several different registration arrangements with costs varying for members of OUCFC, non-members and early registration. Brochures are available for download on the ACOG Web site at [www.acogok.org](http://www.acogok.org).

## EPA Offers Tools to Help Small Communities Control Arsenic

EPA has released a set of user-friendly multimedia products to help small drinking water utilities meet revised regulations to control arsenic. The tools will provide owners and operators with information to guide them in making treatment decisions, agency officials said. The arsenic treatment tool kit provides information to increase local options and sustainable solutions.

The anchor product of this suite of tools is the Arsenic Virtual Trade Show, a learning portal for arsenic-treatment technology. The Web site features a database of vendors, a treatment "decision tree," and tips for evaluating and selecting treatment providers.

Other products being released include:

- A brochure, "Evaluating Arsenic Treatment Providers: A Guide for Public Water Systems," which includes a checklist of questions that owners

and operators of small utilities, should ask treatment providers.

- A CD-ROM disk, "Interactive Workshop on Arsenic Removal from Drinking Water," which features commentary from the nation's top experts. The disk is a companion to 11 arsenic-training events EPA held across the country during 2005.
- DVD collection of videos, the "Arsenic Treatment Technology Showcase," which highlights arsenic treatment technologies currently being pilot-tested through EPA's Arsenic Treatment Technology Demonstration Program.

EPA also updated its Web site to improve navigation and reflect the latest consumer and technical information. Kits including all of the new arsenic tools will be delivered to EPA's state and technical ...See "Arsenic Tools" on page three.

### Inside Perspective:

Legislative Issues for the Region Prioritized for 2006 .....	2
ASPA Oklahoma Seeking Nominations .....	2
Mild Winter Still Harbors CO Concerns .....	3
ACOG Calendar .....	4

# Legislative Issues for the Region Prioritized for 2006

Results from a regional survey of member communities have helped ACOG to develop a prioritized list of federal and state legislative issues and concerns in the region. A legislative information-gathering workshop held last September helped generate the initial list of issues. From there, a survey was developed and analyzed, with members ranking the issues.

Following are the Top Five federal and state issues, ranked in order of importance to ACOG membership:

## Federal Issues:

1. Continuation of federal support for community development programs such as CDBG, workforce development, fire protection, EDA and other programs.

2. Collection of local and state sales (use) taxes on Internet sales and catalogs.
3. Preserve local authorities regarding rights-of-way fees and land use controls.
4. Prohibit unfunded federal mandates; fund efforts to meet federal regulations, such as those regarding water quality, arsenic, stormwater, flood control and air quality.
5. Support continued viability of Tinker Air Force Base, and the developing Maintenance Repair and Overhaul Center.

## State Issues

1. Oppose exemption of sales taxes on groceries, and refrain from "sales tax holidays."
2. Leave local personnel issues to local decision-makers, oppose mandatory collective bargaining, mandatory binding interest arbitration and mandated additional police and fire pensions;

- exempt all management from union membership.
3. Provide for judicial review of arbitration rulings.
4. Allow social security numbers to be withheld from municipal utility Open Records requests.
5. Continue to reduce Workers' Comp expenses.

ACOG has drafted policy statements to clarify each issue. The full list of policy issues is available on the ACOG Web site at [www.acogok.org](http://www.acogok.org). The 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the 50<sup>th</sup> State Legislature convenes on Feb. 6. The first session was highly beneficial to the region with the authorization of wireless 9-1-1 elections, the ending of mandatory collective bargaining for non-uniformed employees, the establishment of training for newly elected officials, outlawing of personal use of traffic signal change devices, and other important provisions.

For more information on this on effort, contact Jane Sutter, ACOG.

## Central Oklahoma *Perspective*

Offering Regional Leaders News and Information

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### Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

*"Providing Regional Leadership in  
Central Oklahoma Since 1966"*

Established in 1966, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) is a voluntary association of cities, towns and counties. ACOG helps member governments plan for common needs, cooperate for mutual benefit and coordinate for sound regional development.

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## ASPA Oklahoma Seeking Nominations

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2006 Administrator of the Year Award. The annual tribute recognizes a public administrator whose career exhibits the highest standards of excellence, dedication, and accomplishment. The award is sponsored by the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration.

Nominees for Administrator of the Year Award are solicited throughout the state. They are judged based on outstanding leadership qualities, high professional and ethical standards, superior record of achievement, and strong commitment to public service. Nominees may work for organizations at any level of government, nonprofit organization, or educational institution.

The deadline for this year's nominations is **March 1**.

Last year's Administrator of the Year was Mike Fogarty, Chief Executive Officer of the Oklahoma Health Care Authority.

Other recent recipients and the positions held at the time of selection include:

Stanley Hupfeld, President and CEO of Integris Health; George Moser, Executive Director of the Oklahoma House of Representatives' Research, Legal and Fiscal Divisions; Bob Conner, Executive Director of the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center at Tinker Air Force Base; Jerry Regier, Oklahoma Cabinet Secretary of Health and Human Services; Leonard Martin, city manager of Edmond, Oklahoma. Other distinguished public servants who have received the honor include Dr. Hans Brisch, Steven Gentling, Connie Irby, Oscar Jackson and Dr. Edward Johnson.

The American Society for Public Administration is a nationwide, nonprofit educational and professional organization. With chapters in every state and a membership of more than 10,000 government and nonprofit administrators, scholars, teachers and students, ASPA is the largest and most prominent professional association in public administration. It is the only organization of its kind in the United States aiming broadly to ...See "Nominations" on page three.

# Mild Winter Still a Threat for Carbon Monoxide

As mild and dry as the 2006 winter has been, it still brings the threat of several weeks of cold weather, and colder weather ushers in carbon monoxide (CO) season, which may pose a threat to the region's air quality status. In the past, carbon monoxide was the region's primary air pollution concern, but the replacement of older vehicles with newer, cleaner motor vehicles lessened CO's impact, and more stringent requirements for ozone now make smog the number one air pollution priority. Still, Central Oklahomans need to remain aware of the indoor and outdoor impacts of carbon monoxide.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless and poisonous gas that can interfere ...See "CO Concerns" on page four.

## "Arsenic Tool"

...Continued from page one. assistance partners for distribution to public water systems affected by the arsenic regulation.

In 2001, EPA revised the regulation for arsenic in drinking water to lower the maximum allowable level from 50 parts per billion to 10 parts per billion. The new standard became effective on Jan. 23, 2006. The Agency estimates that more than 90 percent of the systems affected by the revised rule are small, serving populations of 3,300 or fewer.

To launch the Arsenic Virtual Trade Show, go to [www.arsenictradeshows.org](http://www.arsenictradeshows.org). For more information about arsenic and drinking water, contact John Harrington, ACOG.

## "Nominations"

...Continued from page two. improve the administration and image of public service. The national organization was founded in 1939. The Oklahoma chapter was established in 1964.

To obtain a nomination form or to find out more about the award, visit [www.libarts.ucok.edu/political/organizations/asp/index.html](http://www.libarts.ucok.edu/political/organizations/asp/index.html).



# Around the Region

- **Municipal Government Week** is scheduled for **March 6-10** across the state. The week offers cities and towns around the region a chance to bring citizens and students closer to a community's government. The week is designed to heighten awareness of local government and to increase greater citizen participation. In the past, some communities have held mock citizen council meetings, and have taught students how local governments work. For a planning packet of helpful educational materials, contact the Oklahoma Municipal League at 528-7515.
- The **Oak Cliff Fire Protection District** recently received a new \$340,000 engine pumper truck. The truck was ordered over a year ago and arrived last month. Oak Cliff officials hope that the truck will help lower the district's ISO rating. The district covers 36 square miles and is located in Logan County just north of Edmond.
- The **Red Earth Group** of the **Oklahoma Sierra Club** reports that **Norman Mayor Harold Haralson** was the first mayor from the state to sign the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement. The agreement urges participating cities to commit to meeting environmental policy goals. The group lauded the city of Norman for establishing a list of measurable environmental objectives.
- The **Mustang** and **Warr Acres** Police Departments both received funding recently from the **Oklahoma District Attorney's Council**. The funds, \$5,000 for Mustang and \$3,225 for Warr Acres, will be used for in-vehicle camera equipment. The Council provides justice assistance grants to eligible municipalities from time to time.
- **OML** is sponsoring mandatory training for newly elected public officials on March 11 in **Oklahoma City** at the Oklahoma Regional Training Institute, N.W. 63<sup>rd</sup> and Kelley. The training fulfills recently passed legislative mandates that require newly elected officials to complete certified training to retain their positions. This is one of the few opportunities in the region to attend this training. Call OML at 528-7515 for registration information.
- **State Farm Insurance** recently donated \$2,000 that will help assist **Operation FireSAFE** with its programming needs. Operation FireSAFE is the region's juvenile firesetting prevention program that offers information and counseling to children who have played with or started fires. Since 1992, Operation FireSAFE has relied on 22 community fire departments and mental health professionals in Canadian, Cleveland, Logan and Oklahoma counties to carry out the program. ACOG provides administrative services and the Oklahoma Department of Health and area guidance clinics provide mental health assistance to the program. More than 2,000 children have been educated through the program and reported child-set fires have steadily dropped.



Lois Pokorny, Jimmy Gibson, Ken Pontius, Kelly Dunderley, Tim Adams, Jane Sutter and Marie Helene Lareault, accept a grant from State Farm Insurance for Operation FireSAFE, awarded by Kelly Dunderley (center).

## “CO Concerns”

...Continued from page three.  
with the delivery of oxygen to the body. Health effects vary based on intensity of exposure, but infants, elderly persons and individuals with respiratory diseases are particularly sensitive.

Motor vehicles and two-cycle gasoline power engines cause a large percentage of carbon monoxide pollution as a result of incomplete fuel combustion in cold weather. Higher CO levels generally occur between November and March on clear, low-wind days when air temperature is between 35 and 40 degrees. The evening rush hours are sometimes problematic, due to the high concentration of motor vehicles in areas such as shopping centers and major intersections.

Carbon monoxide emissions increase in cold weather because motor vehicles need more fuel to start in cold temperatures, and because some emission control devices, such as oxygen sensors and catalytic converters, operate less efficiently when they are cold.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) establishes the regulations for carbon monoxide levels. For the region to meet the CO standard, it cannot have more than one episode per year where the eight-hour CO value exceeds the threshold. Since the Clean Air Act Amendments in 1990, the region has exceeded federal standards only once, in 1994.

### February

- 9th Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 20th ACOG Offices Closed for President’s Day
- 23rd 9-1-1 Board of Directors, 1 p.m.  
Intermodal Transportation Policy Committee, 1:20 p.m.  
ACOG Board of Directors, 1:45 p.m.  
Garber-Wellington Policy Committee, 2:30 p.m.

### March

- 9th Areawide Planning Technical Advisory Committee, 9 a.m.  
Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 14th 9-1-1 Technical Committee, 9:30 a.m.
- 21st Operation FireSAFE, 10 a.m.  
Central Oklahoma Clean Cities Stakeholders, 1:30 p.m.
- 30th 9-1-1 Board of Directors, 1 p.m.  
Intermodal Transportation Policy Committee, 1:20 p.m.  
ACOG Board of Directors, 1:45 p.m.  
Garber-Wellington Policy Committee, 2:30 p.m.

Although there hasn’t been a Carbon Monoxide Alert Day issued since 1996, there are still some recommended actions that Central Oklahomans can do to keep CO levels low:

- Driving slowly as the car warms up, instead of idling.
- Decreasing rush-hour traffic by either working at home or arriving and leaving work a little earlier or later.

- Turning off engines while stopped for a train or during other waiting periods.
- Avoiding drive-through windows at restaurants, banks, cleaners, etc.
- Avoiding the use of wood-burning fireplaces and stoves.
- Checking home heating systems for operating efficiency.

For more, contact Jerry Church, ACOG.

## Central Oklahoma *Perspective*

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