



News Release

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Atmos Energy Corporation Calls for Renewed Emphasis on Dog Safety Company Participates in National Dog Bite Prevention Week

DALLAS (May 15, 2006)— Atmos Energy Corporation (NYSE: ATO) meter reader Jason Cokendolpher’s terrifying experience is one reason the company is calling on dog owners to make streets and yards safe for pets and people. “Before I had a chance to react, it knocked me to the ground and those huge teeth were going for my neck,” said Cokendolpher.

Last year, 10 Atmos Energy employees in Texas were attacked by dogs. This year, nine employees have already been bitten. The rising incidence of attacks has led Atmos Energy to join the National Dog Bite Prevention Week call for safety.

“The trend of increasing attacks is a great concern for us,” said Danny Johnson, Atmos Energy Mid-Tex Division meter reading director. “We want all of our employees going home safely at night, and we want dogs to remain safely at home as the family pet.”

National statistics from the Centers for Disease Control show:

- More than 4.7 million Americans are bitten by dogs every year.
- Approximately 12 fatalities annually are linked to dog attacks.
- The insurance industry pays out nearly \$1 billion annually for dog bite injuries.

Cokendolpher said the Pit Bull that attacked him locked its jaw on to his arm. “Fortunately, two elderly women came to my rescue,” he said. “One woman used her cane to distract the dog until it let go.”

In an attempt to reduce violent encounters, Atmos Energy Mid-Tex Division meter readers recently started carrying a new device to reduce the number of dog bites. The ‘Bite Terminator’ system is similar to a quick-release umbrella, which confuses the attacking dog, blocks its vision and gives the meter reader a few extra seconds to escape.

“Initial results show meter readers have been threatened four times by dogs but none have been bitten since we began using the device,” said Johnson. “It’s a win-win; our employees stay safe and dogs stay home rather than being removed by animal control.”

Added Cokendolpher: “Most people say, ‘My dog won’t bite’ but the reality is that dogs can feel threatened for a variety of reasons. We know most people love their dogs, and we simply want to peacefully coexist.”

The third week of May is National Dog Bite Prevention Week across America. As part of dog bite prevention, Atmos Energy encourages its customers to:

- Make sure utility meters can be accessed without disturbing their dog.
- Ensure dogs are restrained or confined to their yard.
- Keep rabies shots up to date.

About Atmos Energy

Atmos Energy Corporation, headquartered in Dallas, is the country's largest natural gas-only distributor, serving about 3.2 million gas utility customers. Atmos Energy's utility operations serve more than 1,500 communities in 12 states from the Blue Ridge Mountains in the East to the Rocky Mountains in the West. Atmos Energy's nonutility operations, organized under Atmos Energy Holdings, Inc., operate in 22 states. They provide natural gas marketing and procurement services to industrial, commercial and municipal customers and manage company-owned natural gas storage and pipeline assets, including one of the largest intrastate natural gas pipelines in Texas. Atmos Energy is a Fortune 500 company. For more information, visit www.atmosenergy.com.

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NATIONAL STATISTICS

- Dog bite statistics reveal that more than 4.7 million people are bitten by dogs every year.¹
- Each year, 800,000 Americans seek medical attention for dog bites; half of these are children. Of those injured, 386,000 require treatment in an emergency department and about a dozen die.²
- Most dog bite injuries are not reported to local police or animal control authorities, though dog bite statistics reveal that bite injuries are responsible for hundreds of millions of dollars in medical costs each year.
- Between the years of 1979 and 1998 more than 300 people were killed by dog bite injuries.
- In the United States, there are slightly more than 53 million dogs sharing the human-canine bond, more dogs per capita than in any other country in the world.³
- Twenty-five different canine breeds have been identified in fatal dog bite accidents. Rottweilers and Pit Bulls account for approximately half of all dog bite related fatalities.
- Dog bite statistics, from the Center for Disease Control, have found that a dog that is chained up is almost three times more likely to bite a human being than an unchained dog.
- According to dog bite statistics, the insurance industry pays out approximately \$1 billion a year for dog bite injury claims.
- Dog bite injuries account for 33 percent of all homeowner's insurance liability claims.

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¹ http://www.onlinelawyersource.com/personal_injury/dog-bite/statistics.html

² <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/biteprevention.htm>

³ http://www.avma.org/public_health/dogbite/dogbite.pdf