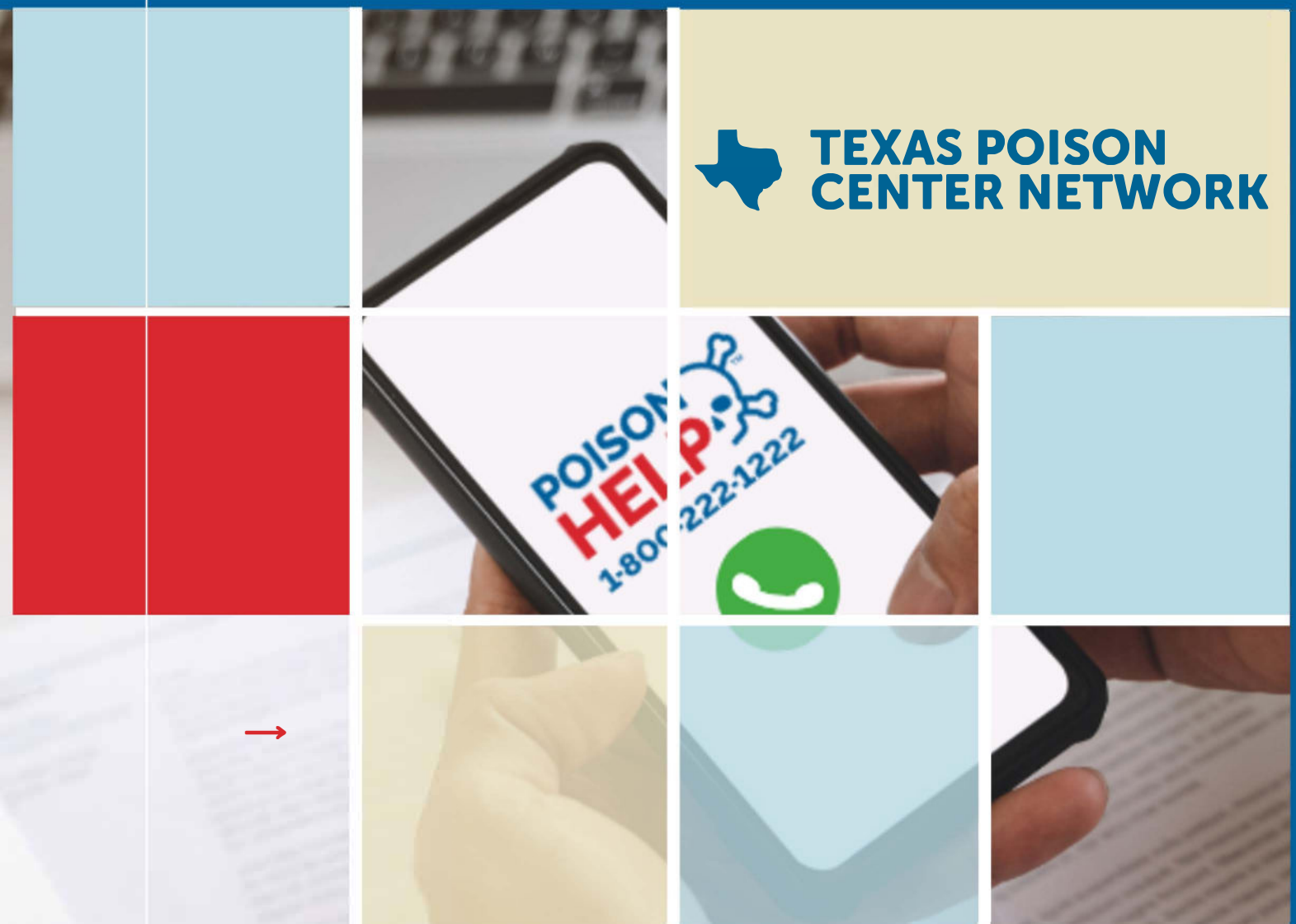
ANNUAL REPORT 2025

TEXAS POISON CENTER NETWORK



COMMISSION ON STATE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

The Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC) is the state's authority on emergency communications, and is the state agency statutorily charged with administering the implementation of statewide 9-1-1 service and the Texas Poison Center Network.

In 1993, the 73rd Texas Legislature created the state Poison Control Program and provided for the joint administration of the program by the Commission on State Emergency Communications and the Texas Department of State Health Services. In 2009, the 81st Texas Legislature shifted administration of the program to CSEC.

TEXAS POISON CENTER NETWORK

The Texas Poison Center Network (TPCN) is made up of six poison centers strategically located across the state, each hosted by a major hospital or university and connected through an advanced telecommunications system.

The network is staffed by nationally accredited Certified Specialists in Poison Information, including pharmacists, nurses, and doctors, who are specially trained to provide expert, real-time guidance on poison exposures to both the public and healthcare providers across Texas.

Mission

The mission of the Texas Poison Center Network is to reduce the morbidity, mortality, and costs associated with poisonings.
This is accomplished by:

- Providing around the clock telephone access to poison control specialists.
- Educating Texas residents on how to prevent, manage, and treat poisonings.
- Raise awareness of the poison center services and how to access them.

Help Available

24/7/365

Real time assistance in

150

languages

POISON HELP™
1-800-222-1222

SIX REGIONAL POISON CENTERS

NORTH TEXAS POISON CENTER
DALLAS, TEXAS

The North Texas Poison Center (NTPC), based at Parkland Health in Dallas, provides expert toxicology information, treatment guidance, and poison prevention education to the public and healthcare professionals across its 42-county service area, serving a population of more than 8.7 million people. In operation since November 1984, NTPC has maintained continuous accreditation by the American Association of Poison Control Centers since 1985. NTPC also works closely with the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center to support toxicology training for healthcare professionals through its fellowship program.

SOUTHEAST TEXAS POISON CENTER
GALVESTON, TEXAS

Since its establishment in 1959, the Southeast Texas Poison Center has been a vital pillar in public health, evolving to serve 28 counties in the region. Staffed with a dedicated team of nurses, pharmacists, and medical doctors, the center is equipped to provide crucial poison information and assistance to community members facing poison-related emergencies. From drug and plant information to snake and chemical inquiries, drug identification, and general medical guidance, the center is a comprehensive hub for health and safety.

CENTRAL TEXAS POISON CENTER
TEMPLE, TEXAS

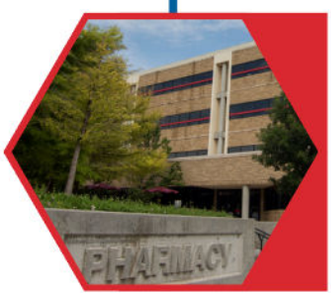
The Central Texas Poison Center (CTPC) has been in operation since 1994, functioning under the Department of Emergency Medicine at Baylor Scott & White Memorial Hospital and Clinic. The center primarily serves Healthcare Service Region 7, which encompasses 30 counties surrounding Bell County. Through its dedicated efforts, the CTPC provides critical support and expertise in poison-related emergencies across the region.

SOUTH TEXAS POISON CENTER
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

The South Texas Poison Center (STPC), established in 1995, serves 47 Texas counties with a 24-hour hotline, education programs, and prevention information for the public and healthcare professionals. Staffed by bilingual Specialists in Poison Information (SPI), the center provides poison-related guidance and conducts research. Covering the fastest-growing regional population in the U.S., STPC focuses on education, media outreach, community health worker training, and expanding poison prevention to schools and underserved areas.

WEST TEXAS POISON CENTER
EL PASO, TEXAS

The West Texas Poison Center (WTPC) at University Medical Center of El Paso is America's first 24-hour bilingual regional poison control center accredited by the American Association of Poison Control Centers since 1997. It traces its roots to a local poison hotline begun in 1958 and continues the tradition of providing bilingual services to the community. The majority of the West Texas region's population is concentrated in El Paso, Midland, Odessa, and San Angelo, while the rest of the 36-county region has limited access to healthcare services often hours away.



TEXAS PANHANDLE POISON CENTER
AMARILLO, TEXAS

The Texas Panhandle Poison Center (TPPC) opened in September of 1994 and has provided the residents of Texas with easily accessed, quality poison information and poison prevention programs ever since. TPPC, an integral part of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy in Amarillo, has been continuously accredited by the American Association of Poison Control Centers since 2001. The TPPC service region covers 71 counties within Public Health Regions 1 & 2.

YEAR IN NUMBERS

A snapshot of poison center activity across Texas in 2025.

253,636

Calls answered

44%

of cases involved children under 6 years old.

93%

of calls from home were treated at home.

80%

of poison exposures occurred by accident.

196,047

of calls involved a poison exposure.

14 seconds

is the average time it takes us to answer a call.

72%

of exposures involved just one product or substance.

TOP SUBSTANCES

Substance exposures differ by age group, highlighting how risk changes across the lifespan.

- ✓ Household cleaning products
- ✓ Pain relievers (analgesics)
- ✓ Cosmetics & personal care products

Ages 5 & Under

- ✓ Household cleaning products
- ✓ Pain relievers (analgesics)
- ✓ Foreign objects & toys

Ages 6–12

- ✓ Pain relievers (analgesics)
- ✓ Antidepressants
- ✓ Antihistamines

Ages 13–19

- ✓ Pain relievers (analgesics)
- ✓ Antidepressants
- ✓ Heart & blood pressure medications

Age 20 & Up

How Exposures Occur

Poison exposures can occur through several routes, depending on the substance and the situation. In Texas, most exposures happen when a substance is swallowed, often involving medications, household products, or items commonly found in the home. These incidents may happen quickly and unintentionally, particularly when products are not stored safely or are mistaken for something else.

Exposures most often occur in the home, where medications, cleaners, and other potentially harmful products are commonly stored and used. Other exposures happen in workplaces, outdoor settings, or vehicles, depending on the substance involved. The location of an exposure can influence both the type of substance encountered and the route through which exposure occurs.

84% of exposures occured by ingestion.

6% Inhalation

5% Dermal

3% Ocular

2% Bite/Stings

Most poison exposures occur during routine, everyday activities.

Education & Prevention

Educators at Texas Poison Center Network engage with the community to promote awareness of the Texas Poison Centers and share poison prevention messages. Poison center educators engage with the community to promote awareness of poison center services and share poison prevention messages and educational materials.

In 2025, educators participated in ***642*** events, reaching over ***56,144*** people. They also reached thousands of Texans with poison prevention messaging through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

Texas Poison Centers partner with many of the state's medical, pharmacy, and nursing schools – educating ***20,074*** healthcare professionals in Medical Toxicology - a sub-specialty of medicine that focuses on the prevention, evaluation, treatment, and monitoring of injury and illness from exposure to drugs, chemicals, and biological/radiological agents.

DIstributed

912,731

educational material across the state of Texas

CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025, the South Texas Poison Center strengthened its partnership with CPS Energy by participating in community fairs throughout the year, expanding poison prevention outreach to underserved and rural communities. This collaboration increased access to education and resources in high-need areas, helping families better prevent and respond to poisoning risks.

South Texas Poison Center

The Central Texas Poison Center launched Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) campaign targeting low-penetration ZIP codes to increase awareness of poison center services, resulting in a 3% response rate and multiple invitations to communities. This outreach expanded visibility and strengthened access to poison center resources in areas where awareness had been limited.

Central Texas Poison Center

CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

The North Texas Poison Center strengthened its partnership with Cook Children's Injury Prevention team through coordinated poison prevention initiatives, including community events and the development of the first bilingual Look-Alike Art Exhibit. This expanded hands-on education and reinforced a shared commitment to accessible, safety focused outreach.

North Texas Poison Center

Dr. Stephen Borron of the West Texas Poison Center was 2025's recipient of the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology's Career Achievement Award — an honor reserved for individuals whose lifelong commitment, leadership, and contributions have profoundly shaped the field of clinical toxicology.

West Texas Poison Center

CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025, the Texas Panhandle Poison Center expanded outreach to families of newborns by renewing partnerships with regional labor and delivery units to distribute poison safety materials focused on the first year of life. TPPC also continued its Medication Cleanout™ program, which since 2009 has hosted 98 events, engaged 28,850 participants, and safely removed more than 99,000 pounds of medications and sharps.

Texas Panhandle Poison Center

AHLS
Advanced
HAZMAT
Life Support

HazMat
LIFE SUPPORT

Expanding local hazardous materials preparedness.

POISON HELP
1-800-222-1222

The Southeast Texas Poison Center marked a major 2025 milestone by hosting the region's first-ever Advanced HazMat Life Support (AHLS) course—expanding local hazardous materials preparedness and strengthening coordinated emergency response and patient care across Southeast Texas.

Southeast Texas Poison Center

AMERICA'S® POISON CENTERS
Treatment • Education • Prevention

Key Findings from the 2026 RAND Report

The National Impact of the U.S. Poison Centers

The Poison Center Network provides $3.1 billion in healthcare savings and benefits

The report ***"Poison Prevention, Treatment, and Detection as Public Health Investments,"*** is a result of an independent assessment by RAND to analyze the monetary and societal value of the Poison Center Network. Overall, the report confirms the essential role Poison Centers play in 1) strengthening the nation's response to poisons and toxic emergencies, 2) providing accessible, expert toxicology guidance across the U.S. and its territories, 3) providing real-time public health surveillance, and 4) offering critical prevention and education services to save lives.

The Benefits Provided by U.S. Poison Centers

- Every $1 spent by Poison Centers on services generates an estimated **$16.77 in benefits.** The most widely recognized cost-saving benefits include avoidable medical utilization, reduced length of hospital stay, mortality risk reduction, and enhanced national public health surveillance.
- America's Poison Centers estimates that federally appropriated funds to Poison Centers save **$450 million annually** in health care costs, yet over the last decade federal and some state funding have been cut or not adjusted for inflation.
- Poison Centers also provide other more difficult to measure benefits such as **prevention**, enhanced emergency **preparedness, trusted expertise,** and supporting **peace of mind for the public**.

The Expanding Role of Poison Centers

- Poison Centers have significantly modernized over the last decade, with many now offering live text and online chat to better meet the changing needs of the public.
- Many Poison Centers have expanded their services to include telehealth delivery, managing a hotline for specialized areas (e.g., rabies or COVID-19 hotline), or product surveillance.
- Poison Centers have also been asked to take on a more critical role in emergency preparedness and disaster response.

Poison Center Funding

Funding for Poison Centers from federal, state, and private sources has **decreased by 8%** from 2011 to 2024.

Amid rising healthcare costs, these funding cuts are an **increasing threat** to the ability of Poison Centers to provide life-saving services and essential 24/7 coverage.

> "I don't think I've ever had a conversation that wasn't helpful in some way. I don't know what I would do if they weren't available, I would frankly be scared." Physician, quote from RAND study

To learn more and read the full report, visit:
PoisonCenters.org/National-Impact-Study

About America's Poison Centers

America's Poison Centers® represents the 53 accredited Poison Centers across the country. We are united in our cause to prevent poison-related health emergencies in America. Through the national Poison Help line (1-800-222-1222) and PoisonHelp.org our member centers provide all Americans expert advice. We also maintain the National Poison Data System® (NPDS), our nation's only near real-time poisoning data surveillance system, integrating the latest information from across Poison Centers.

AMERICA'S POISON CENTERS
Treatment • Education • Prevention

The National Impact of U.S. Poison Centers

POISON CENTERS SAVE MONEY AND LIVES!

$1 = $16.77

DOLLARS SPENT → DOLLARS SAVED

Every dollar spent on services by Poison Centers generates an estimated $16.77 in benefits.

$3.1 BILLION IN BENEFITS

Poison Centers provide benefits and savings to communities including:

- Fewer emergency room visits
- Reduced emergency transportation costs
- Shorter hospital stays
- Reduced risk of death

SAVES $450 MILLION IN HEALTH CARE COSTS

America's Poison Centers estimates that federal appropriated funds to Poison Centers save **$450 million annually** in health care costs.

2 MILLION EXPOSURE CASES

Poisonings are the leading cause of injury-related death, surpassing firearms and motor vehicle accidents. Poison Centers respond to more than **2 million exposure cases** annually.

8% DECREASE IN FEDERAL, STATE, AND PRIVATE FUNDING

Poison Centers have seen an **8 percent decrease in federal, state, and private funding from 2011 to 2024**. Poison Centers are doing more with less. Budget cuts remain an ongoing challenge and threat to the ability of Poison Centers to provide life-saving services across the U.S. and territories.

Poison Centers also provide other difficult-to-monetize benefits such as **prevention**, **education**, enhanced **emergency preparedness**, and increased **peace of mind**.

Poison Center services continue to evolve by:

1. **Researching poisoning exposures, trends, and treatments.**
2. **Increasing role in disaster preparedness and response.**
3. **Offering new technology, such as online chat and text.**
4. **Managing non-poison hotlines for specialized areas, such as COVID-19 and rabies.**

SOURCE: "*Poison Prevention, Treatment, and Detection as Public Health Investments,*" RAND; January 2026.

POISON HELP™

1-800-222-1222

TEXAS POISON CENTER NETWORK