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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Jerry Smith, Canadian County Emergency Management

Canadian County Commissioners Declares March 20-26 Emergency Management Week

Canadian County Commissioners today declared March 20-26 as Emergency Management Week 2011. The action comes on the heels of Gov. Mary Fallin's similar proclamation and as Oklahomans face another spring severe weather season.

All across Oklahoma emergency managers are reminding citizens of the work they do. Although most are aware of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), there are emergency managers at the state and local level as well. In fact, the state boasts more than 350 emergency managers representing Oklahoma's cities, towns, counties and tribal nations.

Many of today's emergency managers are yesterday's civil defense workers. Emergency managers support response and recovery efforts in times of disaster. They coordinate the identification, deployment and use of needed resources by police, fire and other emergency responders. Many local emergency managers also serve as Homeland Security officials.

In recent years alone, emergency managers have helped Oklahomans during wildfires, floods, tornadoes, hazardous materials incidents and numerous ice storms. The emergency management disaster response network helped get drinking water and food to those who had none, generators where electric service was out, additional law enforcement and fire suppression where the flames threatened homes and lives, and hay to livestock where the ground was left barren.

Emergency managers also work to prevent and decrease the effects of disasters through mitigation and preparedness efforts. This work includes delivering funding for school safe rooms, NOAA all hazards weather radios and the acquisition of properties that repeatedly flood. Additionally, emergency managers hold disaster exercises, storm spotter training and provide preparedness messages for severe storm season.

"As we move toward another severe storm season this is a good time to recognize our county's emergency managers efforts that work to keep us safe," said Canadian County Emergency Manager, Jerry Smith. "Whether it's flooding, severe storms or tornadoes, we all need to be more aware of the threats we face in our community and take responsibility to make sure we are properly prepared when disaster strikes," added Mr. Smith

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