



CIC | Corrections Information Council

BOP Response to Winter Weather Emergency in Texas

Friday, February 19, 2021

Over the past week, historic sub-freezing temperatures and snow fell in the state of Texas. There are seventeen BOP facilities in the state of Texas, including a US Penitentiary, seven medium or low-security prisons, two federal medical centers, and two office complexes. The BOP also contracts with four additional private facilities located in Texas. There are 74 DC individuals incarcerated at facilities in Texas. The vast majority are held at USP Beaumont (41) and FMC Carswell (13).

Over the last few days, the CIC received concerns from individuals at USP Beaumont and FMC Carswell about their experiences during this emergency. Individuals from USP Beaumont said they were locked down since Sunday and have not been able to shower, and toilets are not working. They also reported receiving daily rations of bottled water. Individuals from FMC Carswell said that portions of the facility do not have working heat and residents had to take cold showers.

In response to the CIC's inquiries about these concerns, the BOP Public Affairs office stated that backup power and water systems, "are in place at [FMC Carswell and FCC Beaumont] and are functioning as designed." The BOP also stated that potable water is available to all inmates (though they did not specify quantity), and that staff provided additional blankets to residents. The full response from the BOP is included below.

**As of February 22, 2021, various news sources indicate that power and water have been restored in most of Texas, and power outage maps do not list current outages near Carswell or Beaumont.*

Statement from the BOP Office of Public Affairs:

Similar to many of those in the surrounding community and across the state of Texas dealing with heat and water issues during the recent winter storm, the Federal Medical Center (FMC) Carswell and the Federal Correctional Complex (FCC) Beaumont have experienced minor power, heat, and hot water issues that affected the main supply channels. Many of these issues were a result of power outages or water line breaks in the local community. However, back-up systems are in place at both facilities and are functioning as designed. Temperatures are monitored daily throughout the facilities and adjustments are made to equipment as deemed necessary.

Potable water is available to all inmates and, in an abundance of caution, staff provided additional blankets to the inmate population as an additional step to mitigate the cold temperatures affecting this region of the country.

All of our facilities affected by this most recent storm are monitored daily to ensure the safety and well-being of all the inmates entrusted into our care.