



OxySure set to air new product

Startup to seek FDA approval for easy-to-use oxygen-generating device

BY JEFF BOUNDS|STAFF WRITER

A Frisco start-up company is developing a cartridge that it says allows individuals or bystanders to quickly and safely administer pure oxygen to themselves or others.

OxySure systems Inc. says its products allow ordinary people to safely keep supplies of oxygen in portable containers that, including the cartridge and housing weight just 4 pounds and are about the size of a small to mid-sized thermos container.

The devices purportedly will generate 15 to 45 minutes' worth of oxygen, depending on the model and the market they're sold into.

While compressed oxygen in tanks can explode, OxySure's system uses powders it has developed that, alone, do not readily react with other elements. When combined, however, the powders instantly form pure oxygen, the company says.

Non-toxic

"They're not an explosion or fire hazard. They're nontoxic. The residue of the reaction is environmentally friendly," says Julian Ross, chairman and chief executive of OxySure, one of three



TAKING A DEEP BREATH: OxySure Systems' CEO, Julian Ross, Left, and Larry Calton Jr., executive director of the North Texas Enterprise Center for Medical Technology, are seeking FDA approval for the company's oxygen cartridges.

companies working with a Frisco medical-device incubator, the North Texas Enterprise Center for Medical Technology.

Ross declined to disclose what the powders are made of. He says the job of one of the powders is to release oxygen molecules once a chemical reaction takes place. Another powder acts as a catalyst, making the reaction happen. "We have an accelerant in there as well," he says.

Brain damage can begin within three to seven minutes after the organ is deprived of oxygen, depending on a patient's health, age and whether his or her body is hot or cold. But OxySure officials, citing data from the National Fire Protection Association, say fire and rescue squads can have average response times of up to six minutes.

The OxySure system isn't the first answer to the need for quick, pure oxygen, but existing systems have their problems.

Oxygen tanks, though they can be small and easily mobile, can explode. And oxygen generators, which produce oxygen by various different means, such as through chemical reactions, need either a power supply or generate heat, says Dr. James M. Atkins, professor of internal medicine in the division of cardiology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

Medical uses

Some oxygen generators are used in homes, typically by people who need oxygen for medical reasons. They're about the size of a small air-

BREATH OF FRESH AIR

NAME: OxySure Systems Inc.
BUSINESS: Makes devices that administer pure oxygen
ADDRESS: 2611 Internet Blvd., Suite 109
Frisco 75034-9085
TOP EXECUTIVE: Julian Ross, chairman and CEO
REVENUE: N/A
EMPLOYEES: 6
OTHER LOCATIONS: None
PHONE: 214-618-7923
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conditioning unit and must be plugged into electrical outlets.

Airplanes also carry oxygen generators. But federal regulators overhauled rules on airlines transporting chemical oxygen generators after a ValuJet flight crashed in the Florida Everglades in 1996 because some of the devices exploded in its cargo hold. The regulators ruled that passenger flights could carry that type of oxygen generator only for the medical use of a passenger and only if stringent rules are followed.

Safety issues aside, OxySure says its system will be easy to use. The thermos-sized cartridge comes with a bag to carry it around on a hip or belt, along with a mask to be placed over the patient's face. Oxygen flows when a hook and loop attachment to the bag is ripped off and a silver dollar-sized button atop the device is pushed.

OxySure is preparing to submit its device for Food and Drug Administration approval, which it hopes to get in 90 to 150 days.

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