



CARBON MONOXIDE (CO)

What You Should Know

WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE??

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, and deadly gas produced by the incomplete burning of fossil fuels. These fuels can be natural gas, oil, kerosene, coal, or wood. Carbon monoxide is produced by all fuel burning appliances. In the home, sources can be gas and oil furnaces, wood and kerosene stoves. In addition, charcoal fires and environmental tobacco smoke emit CO. Automobile exhaust in attached garages can be another source. Dangerous amounts of CO can accumulate when as a result of poor installation, poor maintenance or failure or damage to an appliance in service, the fuel is not burned properly, or when rooms are poorly ventilated and the Carbon Monoxide is unable to escape.

Having no smell, taste or color, in today's world of improved insulation and double glazing it has become increasingly important to have good ventilation, maintain all appliances regularly and to have absolutely reliable CO Detectors installed giving both a visual and audible warning immediately there is a build up of CO to dangerous levels.

SYMPTOMS OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

At moderate levels, you and your family can get severe headaches, become dizzy, mentally confused, nauseated, or faint. You can even die if these levels persist for a long time. Low levels can cause shortness of breath, mild nausea, and mild headaches, and may have longer-term effects on your health. Since many of these symptoms are similar to those of the flu, food poisoning, or other illnesses, you may not think that CO poisoning could be the cause. Persons suffering from heart or respiratory health problems, infants and small children, unborn children, expectant mothers and pets can be affected by CO poisoning more quickly than others in the household and may be the first to show symptoms.

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Carbon monoxide detectors are widely available in stores and you may want to consider buying one as a back up - BUT NOT AS A REPLACEMENT - for proper use and maintenance of your fuel-burning appliances.

Look for UL certification on any detector you purchase.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT CO IN YOUR HOME...



Evacuate Ventilate Investigate

Move the affected person to fresh air immediately. Administer oxygen if available. If the person is not breathing, perform artificial respiration as taught in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Training until medical help arrives. Open doors and windows turn off combustion appliances and leave the house. Call the local fire department (dial 911) to test for CO, and tell the responding medical personnel that you suspect CO poisoning.

PREVENTION IS THE KEY TO AVOIDING CO POISONING

⌘ Have all of your fuel-burning appliances- including oil and gas furnaces, gas water heaters, gas ranges and ovens, gas dryers, gas or kerosene space heaters, fireplaces, and wood stoves - inspected by a trained professional at the beginning of every heating season. Make certain that the flues and chimneys are connected, in good condition, and not blocked. Choose appliances that vent their fumes to the outside.

⌘ Don't idle the car in a garage - even if the garage door to the outside is open.

⌘ Don't use a gas oven to heat your home, even for a short time.

⌘ Don't ever use a charcoal grill indoors - even in a fireplace.

⌘ Don't sleep in any room with an unventilated gas or kerosene space heater.

⌘ Don't use any gasoline-powered engines (mowers, weed trimmers, snow blowers, chain saws, small engines or generators) in enclosed spaces.

⌘ Don't ignore symptoms, particularly if more than one person is feeling them. You could lose consciousness and die if you do nothing



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CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE
and
The Office of the State Fire Marshal
Department of Public Safety
Public Information Office
1111 Country Club Road
Middletown, CT 06457-9294
(860) 685-8230

