

Important Information About Carbon Monoxide

What You Need to Know
to Protect You and Your Family



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Whether you heat your home with oil, natural gas, propane, coal or wood, your heating system can produce carbon monoxide (CO) if it is not working properly, or if it is inadequately vented.

Carbon monoxide is also produced from internal combustion devices such as cars and small gasoline engines.

Carbon monoxide is odorless, colorless and tasteless but very toxic. Signs indicating the presence of carbon monoxide in the home include stuffy, stale or smelly air; very high humidity; or soot coming from a fireplace or heating system.

What should you do if you suspect the presence of carbon monoxide?

- If you smell gas, alert your family, or co-workers and exit the area immediately. Call 911 to notify your local fire department.
- Open the windows and doors on your way out if you are able to do so.
- If carbon monoxide is detected by your alarm, exit the area immediately, and call 911 to notify your local fire department.
- Have your heating equipment inspected by your fuel supplier or a licensed heating contractor to ensure that it is in good working order.

What are the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning?

The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are often confused with those of influenza, and the highest incidence of poisoning occurs during the flu season.

Symptoms include:

headaches

dizziness

nausea

unclear thinking

shortness of breath

weakness

vision problems

loss of muscle control

High concentrations of carbon monoxide can lead to unconsciousness, brain damage or death. However, a victim may not experience ANY of these symptoms, or only one or a few of the symptoms. You should suspect the presence of carbon monoxide if symptoms tend to disappear when you leave home.

How can you reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning in the home?

- “Tune up” your heating system annually by using a licensed heating contractor or a fuel supplier, preferably before the heating season begins, to ensure that it is in good working order.
- Annually check your chimney or vent pipes for blockage. If a blockage exists, contact a professional chimney sweep immediately.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors on every floor of your home, and make sure they are working properly.
- Make sure your home is adequately ventilated, particularly if you have insulated your home, had major renovation done or have enclosed your heating system.
- In the winter, clear snow and ice from appliance and equipment vents.

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877-944-5325.
For more information, visit
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