

Carbon Monoxide Safety For Your Home



FACTS

Carbon Monoxide is known as the silent killer because it is invisible – odorless, colorless and tasteless.

CO is a toxic gas produced by the incomplete burning of fuels including oil, propane, coal, wood, natural gas, gasoline, diesel fuel, charcoal and kerosene. Faulty or inadequately vented appliances that use these fuels – such as furnaces, fireplaces, wood stoves, charcoal grills, kerosene heaters as well as gasoline-powered generators and vehicles – can produce deadly amounts of CO.

Some warning signs of CO can include stale/stuffy air, excessive moisture on windows and walls and soot buildup around appliance vents.

Symptoms of CO often mimic the “flu” and include headaches, nausea, fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath and stinging or burning of the eyes. Prolonged exposure can cause disorientation, convulsions, unconsciousness (coma) and eventually death.

Infants, the elderly and people with respiratory problems are especially susceptible to CO poisoning. When CO is breathed into the body, carbon monoxide combines with the blood and prevents it from absorbing oxygen.

For more information, visit
ConsumersEnergy.com/cosafety

8 SAFETY TIPS

- 1** The best defense against carbon monoxide poisoning is to install an audible carbon monoxide alarm that meets or exceeds Underwriters Laboratory standards and will alarm if dangerous levels of carbon monoxide are created.
- 2** Inspect your furnace annually and have it tuned up by a qualified service professional.
- 3** Change furnace air filters at least once every other month (more if pets are present) during the heating season.
- 4** Never leave a supplemental heater or fireplace unattended. Keep clothing, papers and other flammable items well away from gas appliances and supplemental heaters.
- 5** Perform a visual inspection of the chimney and vent pipes to make sure they are free of obstructions such as leaves and nests.
- 6** When using generators, be sure they have been connected by a licensed electrician and are only operated where there is adequate ventilation. Never use a generator in a basement, enclosed garage, breezeway, or near air intakes.
- 7** Never leave snow blowers, power lawn equipment or generators running in an enclosed area like a garage. Cars should also never be left running in a garage.
- 8** Never use gas stoves or charcoal grills to heat a building. These appliances can produce deadly amounts of carbon monoxide when used improperly.

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