

CARBON MONOXIDE

What is Carbon Monoxide (CO)?

It is a colorless, odorless non-irritating gas often called the silent killer. Carbon monoxide is the cause of death for hundreds of people and makes thousands ill each year in the United States. In high concentrations CO can cause loss of consciousness and result in death within minutes of exposure.



CAN'T BE SEEN



CAN'T BE SMELLED



CAN'T BE HEARD

Common Sources

- Clothes dryers (gas operated)
- Clogged fireplace
- Gas water heaters
- Portable generators
- Propane supplied appliances (i.e. oven or stove)
- Cars left running in enclosed areas
- A grill used in an enclosed space (i.e. a garage)
- When fuels such as coal, natural gas, oil, and wood are not burned completely (incomplete combustion).

Symptoms



Headache



Shortness of breath



Chest pain



Nausea or vomiting



Dizziness



Collapse



Loss of consciousness

QUICK FACT:

Every year, at least 430 people die in the U.S. from accidental CO poisoning.

SOURCE: CDC



CO Detectors:

1. Install battery operated CO alarm in your home or workplace following the manufacturer instructions for installation.
2. Install CO alarms in central locations and each bedroom of your home.
3. Make sure the CO alarms are connected; so when one alarm is triggered, they all go off.
4. Perform monthly tests that includes checking the batteries, to confirm CO detector is functioning properly.
5. Call 9-1-1 if your CO alarm goes off.



Tips for CO prevention:

- Inspect furnace annually.
- Never operate a generator or grill inside your house or garage.
- Generators should be operated at least 20 feet from the home.
- Maintain gas appliances (dryer, ovens, stoves, etc.) to assure safe operation.
- Fireplaces should be inspected annually before first use of the season.
- Confirm that the damper on your fireplace is open for ventilation.
- Keep vents (dryer, stove, furnace, etc.) clear of debris or snow.
- Never use an oven as a heat source for your home or to dry clothes.

QUICK FACT:

Approximately 50,000 people in the U.S. visit the emergency department each year due to accidental CO poisoning.

SOURCE: CDC



For assistance managing exposures to hazardous substances, please call North Carolina Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.

In case of a life threatening emergency, dial 9-1-1 immediately.



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