

Carbon Monoxide Safety Bulletin

For EMS Personnel



Sources of Carbon Monoxide

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can include headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, weakness, confusion, chest pain, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing. Severe carbon monoxide poisoning may cause loss of consciousness, long-term adverse neurological symptoms and possibly even death.

Safety Reminders:

- Always consider carbon monoxide as a potential cause and danger:
 - when treating patients near carbon fueled (diesel, gas, propane, natural gas) equipment
 - when treating patients in or near confined/enclosed areas
 - if you begin to experience the same respiratory symptoms as the patient you are treating
- If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, be sure to move the patient to a safe location to ensure you and your patient's safety.
- Consider carrying a portable carbon monoxide monitor to alert you to the presence of carbon monoxide when treating patients.

Recent Carbon Monoxide (CO) Incidents in North Carolina:

- Two **farm** employees were overcome with CO while using a propane powered forklift inside a trailer with no ventilation. One employee died, the other was seriously injured and 16 responders were taken to the hospital.
- Eighteen construction workers renovating a **grocery store** experienced CO poisoning while using a propane powered tile cutter without adequate ventilation.
- Sixteen **restaurant** employees experienced CO poisoning due to a problem with the HVAC system in the restaurant's kitchen.