

NBSIA Member Services Safety Bulletin

December 2017

PREVENT CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING



Carbon monoxide, the “silent killer,” is odorless and colorless, and kills 400 Americans per year. Carbon monoxide detectors can save lives. December and January are peak season for CO poisonings. Take extra caution this season by learning more about carbon monoxide and following the tips below.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors in Schools

Assembly Bill 56, Chapter 475 requires CO detectors in each school building that burns fossil fuels and was constructed pursuant to the 2016 CA Building Standards Code, or thereafter. School buildings built before 2016, are **encouraged** to have the devices. Read the full bill at http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140AB56

Where Does Carbon Monoxide Come From?

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) says about 170 people in the United States die every year from CO produced by non-automotive consumer products, such as room heaters. But how? Carbon monoxide is produced by burning fuel in cars or trucks, small engines, stoves, lanterns, grills, fireplaces, gas ranges, portable generators or furnaces. When the gas builds up in enclosed spaces, people (and animals) who breathe it can become poisoned. Ventilation does not always guarantee safety.

How to Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- Install a battery-operated CO detector in your home near bedrooms. Check/replace the battery when you change your clocks each spring and fall.
- Have your heating system, water heater and any other gas or coal-burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- Do not use portable flameless chemical heaters indoors.
- Never use a generator inside your home,

basement or garage or less than 20 feet from any window, door or vent; fatal levels of CO can be produced in just minutes.

- Have your chimney checked and cleaned every year, and make sure your fireplace damper is open before lighting a fire and well after the fire is extinguished.
- Make sure gas appliances are vented properly.
- Never use a gas oven for heating your home.
- Never let a car idle in the garage.

Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- Mild symptoms are often mistaken for the flu.
- Low to moderate carbon monoxide poisoning is characterized by: headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea, and dizziness.
- High level carbon monoxide poisoning results in: mental confusion, vomiting, loss of muscular coordination, loss of consciousness, and death.

When A Carbon Monoxide Alarm Sounds

NEVER ignore a carbon monoxide alarm. Do not try to find the source of the gas, instead:

- Immediately move outside to fresh air.
- Call emergency services, fire department or 911.
- Check that all persons are accounted for.
- Do not reenter the premises until emergency responders have given you permission to do so.

Source

<http://www.nsc.org/learn/safety-knowledge/Pages/carbon-monoxide.aspx>



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