

## Carbon Monoxide Alarms

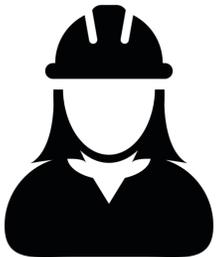
**Every home with a fuel-burning appliance/heater, attached garage or fireplace should have a CO alarm.**

When choosing a CO alarm, make sure it has a certification mark from an agency accredited by the Standards Council of Canada, such as the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC). Proper certification marks show that the alarm you're purchasing meets Canadian safety standards.

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions regarding the installation and maintenance of your CO alarm.



- ◆ Install CO alarms.
- ◆ Test alarms monthly and replace batteries according to the manufacturer's instructions.



- ◆ Have all fuel-burning appliances maintained annually or according to manufacturer's instructions.

## FACT

- ◆ There are more than 300 CO-related deaths each year in Canada and more than 200 people are hospitalized per year for CO poisoning.

## If you suspect CO in your home...

Carbon monoxide inhibits the blood's capacity to carry oxygen and can cause health problems before you even notice that it's present.

At low levels, effects include flu-like symptoms, such as tiredness, headaches, shortness of breath, and impaired motor functions.

At high levels, or if you are exposed to low levels for long periods of time, you can experience dizziness, chest pain, poor vision, and difficulty thinking.

Being exposed to too much CO for too long could lead to unconsciousness, brain damage, and death.

**If you suspect CO poisoning, get into fresh air immediately and call 911 or your local emergency number.**



## CONTACT US

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**FOR EMERGENCIES CALL 9-1-1!**

# Carbon Monoxide Safety



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## Carbon Monoxide...What is it?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a toxic gas that you can't see or smell, which can be harmful if you are exposed to it.

## Where does it come from?

Carbon monoxide is a by-product of burning gasoline, natural gas, propane, wood, oil, kerosene, or methane. When these fuels don't have enough fresh air to burn completely, or if exhaust isn't vented to the outdoors, a build-up of carbon monoxide can result. It can come from:

- ◆ Furnaces, gas range/stoves, gas clothes dryers, water heaters, boilers, fireplaces, and wood-burning stoves
- ◆ Portable fuel-burning heaters and stoves, such as those used for camping
- ◆ Vehicles, generators, and other combustion engines running in an attached garage or other enclosed space
- ◆ Blocked chimneys or flues
- ◆ Cracked or damaged furnace exchangers
- ◆ Second-hand smoke
- ◆ Back drafting and changes in air pressure
- ◆ Barbecues and grills

## How can you tell if CO is present?

Often called "the invisible killer," CO is an invisible, odourless, colourless gas. Unlike many other toxins and poisons, CO doesn't irritate your body or cause pain—meaning there's often no warning or danger signs of its presence. That's why it's important to be alert to the physical symptoms of CO, such as unexplained:



◆ Severe headaches



◆ Nausea  
◆ Vomiting



◆ Dizziness  
◆ Confusion

◆ Disorientation



◆ Fatigue  
◆ Weakness



◆ Sleepiness  
◆ Lack of consciousness

## How can you prevent CO exposure?

The risk of CO poisoning from correctly installed, well-maintained, and properly used appliances is extremely low. You can reduce the risk even further by having a licensed contractor install, inspect, and service your appliances as well as check vents regularly to make sure they are connected, clear of obstructions, and in good repair.

Other prevention tips:

- ◆ Make sure exterior air ducts, exhaust vents and insect screens are clear, allowing air to flow freely, especially during/after a snowstorm
- ◆ Open the damper and a window or door nearby when using a wood-burning fireplace. Before you close the damper, make sure the ashes have cooled
- ◆ Always use the exhaust fan when cooking on a gas range, to ventilate fumes to the outside. Never use your oven to heat your home.
- ◆ Never use a portable generator, gas or propane BBQ, heater, lamp or other appliance intended for outdoor-use only inside a house, apartment/condo, garage, tent or RV.
- ◆ Don't start chainsaws, gas-powered leaf blowers or lawnmowers in a garage or enclosed space
- ◆ Never start a vehicle in a closed garage. Exit the garage immediately after starting the vehicle.



Can't See It



Can't Smell It



Can't Hear It