

## What Should I Do If My CO Detector Alarm Goes Off?

- Make sure no one is experiencing any signs of CO poisoning
- If symptoms of CO poisoning are present, every one should exit the building leaving the doors open as you go.
- **GET IMMEDIATE MEDICAL HELP!**
- Use a neighbor's telephone to report the alarm and follow the instructions you are given.
- If symptoms of CO poisoning are not present, open the windows and doors, shut down heating and cooking equipment.
- Call a qualified technician to inspect and service your equipment.
- Be on the look out for symptoms of CO poisoning.

## Protecting Your Family From CO

Safe use and proper installation of household appliances that burn fossil fuels, as well as, proper use of vehicles, especially in attached garages, is the best protection you can provide for your family. CO detectors can add a level of protection, but are not a substitute for safe use of equipment. Have all heating equipment inspected and serviced each year and know the proper use and maintenance of household cooking equipment.

## Examples of CO producing devices commonly used around the home:

- **Fuel fired furnaces (non-electric)**
- **Gas water heaters**
- **Gas stoves**
- **Gas dryers**
- **Fireplaces and woodstoves**
- **Gas and charcoal grills**
- **Lawnmowers, snowmobiles, and other yard equipment**
- **Automobiles**

## INDEPENDENCE FIRE DEPT



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Carbon Monoxide  
DETECTOR



PARTS PER MILLION OF AIR  
Low or No Battery

TEST/RESET  
PEAK LEVEL

# Carbon Monoxide

## "The Silent Killer"

The Dangers Of  
Carbon Monoxide (CO)  
And The Value Of  
CO Detectors

INSTALL A CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR TODAY!

## What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless gas that comes from burning fossil fuels such as gasoline, wood, coal, propane, oil and methane. When these fuels burn incompletely, CO is produced. Home heating and cooking appliances can produce CO if damaged or misused. Vehicles such as cars, trucks, tractors and lawn mowers are also a source of CO. Any motor allowed to run indoors can produce dangerous levels of CO.

## Effects of CO Exposure to

Carbon Monoxide replaces the oxygen in blood, causing the body to poison itself by cutting off the oxygen that is needed by organs and cells. Flu-like symptoms are an early indication of low level CO poisoning. More serious exposure can lead to dizziness, mental confusion, severe headaches, fainting, and even death. Carbon Monoxide is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States, according to the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA). **It is estimated that 1500 people die annually due to accidental Carbon Monoxide exposure, and an additional 10,000 seek medical attention.** Many doctors say that it is difficult to determine the total number of CO related incidents because the symptoms of CO poisoning closely resemble many other common ailments.

## What Are Carbon Monoxide Detectors?

Carbon Monoxide detectors measure the amount of CO gas that has accumulated. Current CO detectors sound an alarm when the concentration of CO in the air is equal to or above 10% carboxyhemoglobin level in the blood. 10% carboxyhemoglobin is the lowest level of CO poisoning. This sensitivity may cause the alarm to sound before symptoms appear. It is important to treat all alarms as serious and have the cause determined to be sure your home is safe.

When buying a CO detector, buy only units that have been tested by qualified testing laboratories. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for installation and use of your CO detector in your home. Test your CO detector once a month with your smoke detectors. Replace CO detectors every two years, or as recommended by the manufacturer. Plan and practice a home evacuation plan with all members of the family in case of any emergency.

### Remember...

Carbon Monoxide Detectors **ARE NOT** Smoke detectors. Install a smoke detector on each level of your home and one outside each sleeping area.



## The Following Is A List Of Safety Tips:

- Do not run motors indoors; even if garage doors are open.
- Have your vehicles inspected for exhaust leaks.
- Inspect and repair chimneys, fireplaces, wood stoves, etc. each year before cold weather sets in.
- Be sure your heating equipment has an adequate supply of fresh air for combustion.
- Open the flue when using the fireplace to insure adequate ventilation.
- Always refuel kerosene heaters outdoors after heater has cooled sufficiently. **KEROSENE HEATERS ARE ILLEGAL IN MANY STATES. BEFORE BUYING OR USING ONE, CHECK WITH AUTHORITIES TO BE SURE IT IS LEGAL.**
- Gas and charcoal barbecue grills can produce CO. Never use them indoors or in the garage; even if the garage doors are opened.
- When camping, use battery-powered heaters and lights in tents, trailers and mobile homes.
- CO DETECTORS ARE REQUIRED IN ALL RECREATIONAL VEHICLES.

