



# WEEKLY ES&H TOOLBOX TALK

## COMMUNICATIONS

OCTOBER 19, 2009

### WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE?

*Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless, poisonous gas which kills or makes sick thousands of people each year in the United States.*



### What are the sources of carbon monoxide?

Sources of CO include fuel-burning appliances (furnaces, ranges, water heaters, and room heaters), burning charcoal inside and leaving vehicles running in garages.

### What are the symptoms of CO poisoning?

The initial symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu (but without running the fever). They include:

Headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea, and dizziness.

Many people with CO poisoning mistake their symptoms for the flu or are misdiagnosed by physicians. This lack of recognition sometimes results in

further exposure to CO and an increased potential for death.

### What should you do if you are experiencing symptoms of CO poisoning?

If you think you are experiencing any of the symptoms of CO poisoning—get fresh air immediately. Open windows and doors for more ventilation, turn off any combustion appliances, and leave the house. Call the fire department and report your symptoms.

### YOU COULD LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS AND DIE IF YOU FAIL TO TAKE ACTION!

It is also important to contact a doctor immediately for a proper diagnosis. Inform your doctor that you suspect CO

poisoning is causing your problems.

### What should you do when the CO detector/ alarm sounds?

**Never ignore an alarming CO detector/alarm! If the detector/alarm sounds, operate the reset button. Call emergency services ( fire department or 911). Immediately move to fresh air—outdoors or by an open door/window.**



## WHAT SHOULD I DO TO PREVENT CO POISONING?

### APPLIANCES & HEATING SYSTEMS

Make sure appliances are installed according to manufacturer's instructions and local building codes.



CO MONITOR INSTALLED NEAR HEATING SYSTEM

Most appliances should be installed by professionals. Have the heating systems (including chimneys and vents) inspected and serviced annually. The inspector should

also check chimneys and flues for blockages, corrosion, partial and complete disconnections, and loose connections. Never attempt to service fuel burning appliances unless you are fully qualified to do so.

### INSTALL A CO DETECTOR/ALARM

Install a CO detector/alarm that meets the current UL standard 2034 or the IAS 6-96 standard. A CO detector/alarm can provide added protection, but is no substitute for proper use and upkeep of appliances.

### How and where should I install a CO detector/ alarm?

Every CO detector/alarm should be installed according to the specific manufacturer's instructions for the specific unit purchased? The U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that one CO alarm be installed in the hallway outside the bedrooms in each sleeping area of the home. Make sure the detector cannot be covered by furniture or draperies. CO detectors are also recommended for boats, motor homes, and RV's.

### OTHER TIPS

Never burn charcoal or use portable fuel-burning camping equipment inside a home, garage, vehicle or tent. Do not use gasoline-powered tools or generators indoors—even in an emergency.

Never leave a vehicle running in a garage—even with the door open.

Never use gas appliances, such as ranges, ovens, etc. as a heat source for the house.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

[www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)