

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas that you cannot see, smell or taste. It is produced by the incomplete burning of fuels such as natural gas, propane, heating oil, kerosene, coal, charcoal or wood. Improperly installed or poorly maintained appliances that run on these fuels may create unsafe levels of CO. Therefore, it is important that such appliances are installed and regularly maintained by trained service technician. In enclosed spaces such as your home, cottage or recreational vehicle, even a small amount of CO is dangerous.

Symptoms

Exposure to CO can cause flu-like symptoms such as headaches, nausea, dizziness, burning eyes, confusion, drowsiness and even loss of consciousness. In very severe cases, CO poisoning can cause death. Older people, people with heart or breathing problems, children and pets may experience the effects earlier than others.

At any time, if you or anyone else in your home is experiencing the symptoms of CO poisoning, get everyone out of the house and seek medical help. Call 911 or your local fire department.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

All carbon monoxide alarms should bear the CSA seal of approval. At least one alarm should be installed at knee-height, near the sleeping area of your home, cottage and recreational vehicle. You may need more than one alarm if sleeping areas are on more than one level. Refer to the manufacturer's instructions for more information about proper use and maintenance of your alarms

If a CO alarm sounds in your home, cottage or recreational vehicle, open all doors and windows to ventilate. If you cannot find the problem and the alarm continues, leave the building and contact a qualified service technician to check your fuel-burning equipment.

Danger Signs

- Symptoms of CO poisoning
- Stale or stuffy air
- Smell of gas when the fuel-burning appliance turns on
- Pilot light on your fuel-burning appliance goes out
- Chalky white powder forms on the chimney or exhaust vent pipe
- Excessive moisture forms on windows and walls
- CO alarm sounds

Additional information available from Technical Standards and Safety Authority (www.tssa.org)