



BETTERSAFE

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

How to Protect Your Home & Family FROM CARBON MONOXIDE

With cooler weather on the way, it's critically important to ensure you're heating your home safely. Carbon monoxide (CO), produced by furnaces, water heaters, vehicles, portable generators, stoves, lanterns, gas ranges, or burning wood can make you sick and even be life-threatening.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas. It's produced any time a fossil fuel is burned.

STAY SAFE

Carbon monoxide detectors are a must to protect you from CO poisoning. Experts recommend that carbon monoxide detectors are placed strategically throughout your home. To keep your family safe, you should install detectors in these key areas:

- » On every floor of your home, so you can hear the alarm no matter where you are
- » Right outside sleeping areas to ensure no one sleeps through the alarm
- » Near appliances that could leak carbon monoxide but still at least 15 feet away to prevent false alarms
- » On or near the ceiling where hot air carrying CO gas is likely to accumulate



On the contrary, you should avoid placing detectors:

- » Near drafty areas such as windows
- » In or near the bathroom where high humidity could cause false alarms
- » In the path of direct sunlight to help prevent false alarms

Installing carbon monoxide detectors is essential, but it's also critical to regularly check that they're working properly. You can quickly and easily test your detectors. You can check the instruction manual for directions specific to your unit, but in general, testing involves these two simple steps:

- » Press and hold the "Test" button for a few seconds. Loud beeping indicates the detector is working correctly.
- » Release the button.

Change the batteries if the unit fails the test and replace the detector immediately if replacement batteries don't make a difference.

It's also highly recommended that you have certain appliances and machines inspected yearly by a professional technician. Here are the systems and appliances that require regular inspection:

- » Furnaces
- » Boilers
- » Water heaters
- » Fireplaces
- » Ovens and ranges
- » Wood burning stoves
- » Space heaters
- » Charcoal and propane grills
- » Backup generators
- » Automobiles
- » Gas-powered lawn mowers

Follow the guidelines on your appliances, too, and replace any units that are damaged or outdated.

DO'S & DON'TS

When it comes to carbon monoxide poisoning these do's and don'ts are critical:

- » Do leave your home immediately and call 911 if your CO detector alarm sounds.
- » Don't heat your house with a gas oven.
- » Don't run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the door open.
- » Don't burn anything in a stove or fireplace that is not vented.
- » Don't ever use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline or charcoal-burning device inside your home, basement, or garage, or outside less than 20 feet from a window, door, or vent.



KNOW THE SIGNS

If you or a family member experiences a number of the following symptoms, you may have CO poisoning. If so, get outside as fast as possible and call 911 immediately.

- » Headache
- » Dizziness
- » Nausea
- » Confusion and drowsiness
- » Fast heartbeat and chest pain
- » Vision problems
- » Seizures