

Please follow these safety tips:

- **DO NOT** use an oven or range as a heater.
- **DO NOT** let the car run in an attached garage.
- **DO NOT** use a gas or kerosene space heater inside a home, garage, cabin or other enclosed space.
- **DO NOT** sleep in a room with an un-vented gas or kerosene space heater.
- **DO NOT** operate fuel-powered engines (generators, chain saws, etc.) indoors.
- **DO NOT** use a barbecue grill indoors.
- **DO** follow operating and maintenance instructions for fuel-burning appliances and equipment.



When using fuel-burning appliances, look for these warning signs:

- A gas appliance with a yellow flame (it should burn blue).
- Soot build-up on or around your appliances.
- Rust stains on vents or chimneys.
- Increased condensation on windows.
- Lack of hot water.
- Furnace running longer and not heating as well.

Call a certified repairman immediately if you see any of these warning signs.

Guide for Buying a Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detector:

- CO detectors cost about \$25-50 and can often be found near the smoke detectors at your local department or hardware store.
- Before purchasing, be sure the detector is United Laboratories-approved (look for “UL2034” on the package) to ensure quality.
- If you buy a plug-in detector, make sure that it also has battery back-up so it will work during a power outage.
- The digital number display is optional. It will show the level of carbon monoxide in the air in the event of a leak. This is helpful, but not required. If the alarm sounds, you should leave your house, no matter how big or small the number displayed is.
- If you receive heating assistance, you may be eligible for a free CO detector. Please contact the agency responsible for your program.



Michigan Department of Community Health

Carbon Monoxide



Poisoning Prevention

PO Box 30195
Lansing, Michigan 48909

(517) 335-8350
1-800-MI-TOXIC

www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxic

Special thanks to the Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services for providing much of this information.

Michigan Department
of Community Health



Protect Yourself From
Carbon Monoxide
Poisoning at Home



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What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas. You can't see or smell it; yet it can kill you and others within minutes if you breathe in high levels of the gas. Even at low levels, carbon monoxide still can make you very sick.

Symptoms of CO Poisoning

Symptoms of CO poisoning include headaches, dizziness, fatigue, confusion, nausea, and shortness of breath. These symptoms are similar to the flu. However, if you feel better when you leave your home for a while or many of your family members become ill at the same time, it may be carbon monoxide poisoning. People with anemia, heart or lung problems, children and unborn babies are most at risk of carbon monoxide's deadly effects.



What To Do if You Suspect CO

Move yourself, your family and your pets to fresh air quickly. If you don't, you could pass out within minutes and die. If you feel ill, call 911 from outside your home or go directly to an emergency room. There is a blood test that can quickly check for CO poisoning. The faster you are treated, the better your chances for a quick recovery.

Make sure a qualified professional checks your fuel-burning appliances (furnaces, etc) before you return home.

Where Does CO Come From?

Small amounts of CO are produced whenever fuels such as gas, oil, kerosene, charcoal or wood are burned. Normally the gases are sent outside through a chimney or venting system. If there is a problem though, the smoke or exhaust can leak inside your house and carbon monoxide could build up to dangerous levels within minutes.

What Can You Do?

You can protect your household by having a trained professional perform a safety inspection on all fuel-burning appliances each fall. Call your utility company or heating contractor for an appointment. This is the most important step you can take!

The inspector should check to make sure:

- Appliances are installed and operating properly.
- All burners are getting enough outside/fresh air for complete combustion.
- No appliance is producing a dangerous level of CO.
- All vents, chimneys and flues are clear and well-connected.



Carbon Monoxide Detectors

While prevention of CO is your first priority, you should also install CO detectors.

Plug-in and battery-powered detectors are designed to sound an alarm when they sense harmful CO levels. Use detectors only as a back-up measure, not as a substitute for common sense and an annual appliance inspection and maintenance.

Be sure to note how long the sensor located inside the detector is expected to last—the sensor doesn't last forever and will have to be replaced according to the manufacturer's directions. Most detectors will last for about seven years.

You should test your detector monthly. If your detector is battery-powered, the battery should be replaced twice a year (just like a smoke detector).



While some CO detectors may look like smoke detectors, their purpose is completely different. For a safe home, you should have smoke AND carbon monoxide detectors.