

D'Iberville Fire Department Safety Tips

Subject: Carbon Monoxide

Carbon Monoxide also known as CO is an odorless, colorless and toxic gas. Because it is impossible to see, taste or smell the toxic fumes, CO can kill you before you are aware it is in your home. At low levels of exposure, CO causes mild effects that are often mistaken for the flu. These symptoms include headache, dizziness, disorientation, nausea and fatigue. The effects of CO exposure can vary greatly from person to person depending on age, overall health and the concentration and length of exposure.

Carbon Monoxide can come from several sources: gas-fired appliances, charcoal grills, wood-burning furnaces, fireplaces and motor vehicles.

Protect yourself and your family from CO poisoning:

- Install at least one UL listed Carbon Monoxide alarm with audible warning signal near the sleeping areas and outside individual bedrooms. Carbon Monoxide alarms measure levels of CO over time and are designed to sound an alarm before an average, healthy adult would experience symptoms. It is very possible that you may not be experiencing symptoms when you hear the alarm. This does not mean that CO is not present.
- Never use a gas range or oven to heat your home. Only use gas heaters inside when they are properly ventilated to the outside to allow the exhaust fumes that contain CO to escape in to the atmosphere.
- Have a qualified professional check all fuel burning appliances, furnaces and chimney systems for proper ventilation at least once a year.
- Never keep a vehicle running in the garage. Even if the garage doors are open, normal circulation will not provide enough fresh air to reliably prevent a dangerous buildup of CO.
- If you CO detector goes off, exit your home and call your local fire department. Most fire departments have portable CO monitoring equipment to check the levels of CO present in your home. They also

have the equipment to safely ventilate your home to help remove the CO fumes.

- In the event a high level of CO fumes are detected in your home contact a qualified professional service technician immediately to check and repair your equipment.