

Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Effects of CO Exposure to People

Carbon monoxide replaces the oxygen that is in your bloodstream, which can lead to suffocation. Flu-like symptoms are early indication of mild CO poisoning. More serious exposure can lead to difficulty breathing and eventually death. Those most at risk for poisoning are children four years or younger, and people 75 or older.

If your CO detector sounds its alarm:

1. Make sure everyone in the house is OK. See if anyone has any symptoms of illness.

If someone is sick, **CALL 911** and **LEAVE THE HOUSE!** Or take your cell phone outside with you and then call 911.
2. If everyone is OK, check the reading on the CO detector. There is a 3-digit number that tells the CO level.
3. If the number is NOT zero, leave the house and call 911. Wait for the fire department to arrive and let them investigate the CO source.
4. Please do not open windows and doors prior to the arrival of the Fire Department. This will assist us in finding possible sources for the alarm.

Annually 1,500 people are killed and 10,000 people seek medical attention as a result of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning (CO).

Carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless gas that comes from burning fossils fuels such as gasoline, wood, coal, propane, oil, and methane. When these fuels burn incompletely, CO is produced. Home heating and cooking appliances can produce CO if they are damaged or misused. Vehicles such as cars, trucks, tractors, and lawn mowers are also sources of CO. Any motor allowed to run indoors could produce dangerous levels of CO.

If your home is equipped with gas appliances, install a CO detector in the same room as the appliance and another by the sleeping areas of your home.

The Ottawa Hills Fire and Rescue Department has CO detectors to loan out to any resident who has a concern about the potential for carbon monoxide's leaking into their home.

Please call 419.531.4849 if you would like to use a CO alarm.