



Fire Prevention:

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless and tasteless gas made as a by product of combustion.

Carbon monoxide is heavier than oxygen and binds to the blood cells in our bodies that carry oxygen 100 times more than oxygen does. Because it is heavier than oxygen it travels away from the source and begins to collect in higher spaces filling a room or other area from the top down.

The only way to detect carbon monoxide is with a carbon monoxide detector. A smoke detector does not detect carbon monoxide unless it is labeled as a "Smoke-Carbon Monoxide Detector."

When exposed to carbon monoxide it first causes vague symptoms commonly mistaken for the flu. Carbon monoxide poisoning also causes headaches, vomiting, aches/pains, altered level of consciousness, confusion, as well as numerous other symptoms. With prolonged exposures or high level of exposures, carbon monoxide is fatal.

Gas, kerosene, and wood burning heaters/stoves/fireplaces, furnaces and other gas appliances must be properly ventilated. Cars should not be running in the garage for any prolonged amount of time.

Carbon monoxide detectors should be placed in your home, one on every floor and one by the sleeping areas of your home (in bedrooms or outside of hallway by bedrooms). Because carbon monoxide is heavier than the oxygen we breathe it will travel away from the source to the distant parts of our homes (usually bedrooms). Assure detectors are near sleeping areas of home, more so than near gas appliances. Check your carbon monoxide detector regularly; replace batteries twice yearly; and replace your detector every 10 years.

If your carbon monoxide detector sounds/alerts, exit your home and call 9-1-1. Do not open doors/windows. Opening doors and windows will allow carbon monoxide to exit home, giving a negative result when the fire department tests for carbon monoxide. If windows/doors are open or the area is ventilated the fire department will close all vents, windows, and doors and retest with a carbon monoxide detector to assure your safety.

Contact your local utility company or other professional to connect new gas lines and assure no leaks are present.

