

Carbon Monoxide – What You Need To Know!

When it comes to Carbon Monoxide Safety, we all have a role to play.
Find out what you need to do to help keep you and your family safe!

What Is Carbon Monoxide:

- Carbon monoxide (CO) is known as the silent killer because it is an invisible, tasteless and odourless gas that can be deadly.
- CO is produced when fuels such as propane, gasoline, natural gas, heating oil or wood do not burn completely in fuel-burning appliances and devices such as furnaces, fireplaces, hot water heaters, stoves, barbeques, portable heaters and generators or vehicles.
- Over 80% of CO-related injuries and deaths in Ontario occur in the home (source: TSSA).

Symptoms Of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning:

- Exposure to CO can cause flu-like symptoms such as headaches, nausea and dizziness, as well as confusion, drowsiness, loss of consciousness and death.
- If your CO alarm sounds, and you or other occupants suffer from symptoms of CO poisoning, get everyone out of the home immediately. Then call 9-1-1 or your local emergency services number from outside the building.
- If your CO alarm sounds, and no one is suffering from symptoms of CO poisoning, check to see if the battery needs replacing, or the alarm has reached its "end-of-life" before calling 9-1-1.

Carbon Monoxide Alarm Installation Requirements:

- Fuel-burning appliances include furnaces, hot water heaters, gas or wood fireplaces, portable fuel-burning heaters and generators, barbeques, stoves and vehicles.
- If your home has a fuel-burning appliance, a fireplace or an attached garage, install a carbon monoxide alarm adjacent to each sleeping area.
- **If you live in an apartment or condo building:**
 - If there is a fuel-burning appliance in your condo/apartment, install a carbon monoxide alarm adjacent to each sleeping area.
 - If your building has a service room, carbon monoxide alarms must be installed in the service room and adjacent to each sleeping area of all condos/apartments above, below and beside the service room.
 - If your building has a garage, carbon monoxide alarms must be installed adjacent to each sleeping area of all condos/apartments above, below and beside the garage.
 - For added protection, install a carbon monoxide alarm on every storey of the home according to manufacturer's instructions

In general, “adjacent to each sleeping area” means the hallway serving or area outside the sleeping area. For instance, a CO alarm must be installed in the hallway adjacent to multiple bedrooms in a house or apartment.

However, there may be situations where “adjacent to each sleeping area” refers to the area around the bed, within the bedroom or sleeping area itself.

Compliance With The Legislation Will Be Phased-In:

- Homeowners and property owners/tenants in buildings that contain no more than 6 suites must comply as of April 15, 2015.
- Residential occupancy owners of buildings with more than 6 suites have 12 months to comply (October 15, 2015).
- CO alarms that have already been installed must be maintained in accordance with the Fire Code effective October 15, 2014.

How To Prevent The Build-Up Of Carbon Monoxide In Your Home:

- Ensure fuel-burning appliances, chimneys and vents are cleaned and inspected by professionals every year before cold weather sets in. Visit COSafety.ca to find a registered contractor near you.
- Ensure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, fireplace and other fuel-burning appliances should always be clear of snow and other debris.
- Gas and charcoal barbeques should only be used outside, away from all doors, windows, vents, and other building openings. Never use barbeques inside garages, even if the garage doors are open.
- Portable fuel-burning generators should only be used outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from windows, doors, vents and other building openings.
- Ensure all portable fuel-burning heaters are vented properly, according to manufacturer’s instructions.
- Never use the stove or oven to heat your home.
- Open the flu before using a fireplace for adequate ventilation.
- Never run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor inside a garage, even if the garage doors are open. Always remove a vehicle from the garage immediately after starting it.

Carbon Monoxide Alarm Testing And Replacing Tips:

- Landlords are responsible for installing and maintaining carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in their rental units
- Landlords are required to test CO alarms in rental units annually and when the battery is replaced, changes are made to the electric circuit or a change of tenancy occurs.
- It is against the law for tenants to remove the batteries or tamper with CO alarms in any way.
- Test CO alarms every month by pressing the test button.
- Replace batteries every year.
- Replace CO alarms according to manufacturer's instructions.

Know The Sound Of The CO Alarm:

- Your CO alarm sounds different than your smoke alarm. Test both alarms monthly and make sure everyone in your home knows the difference between the two alarm sounds.
- Know the difference between the CO alarms' low-battery warning, end of life warning and an emergency alarm – consult the CO alarm manufacturer's instructions.

What To Do If The CO Alarm Sounds:

- Exposure to CO can cause flu-like symptoms such as headaches, nausea and dizziness, as well as confusion, drowsiness, loss of consciousness and death.
- If your CO alarm sounds, and you or other occupants suffer from symptoms of CO poisoning, get everyone out of the home immediately. Then call 9-1-1 or your local emergency services number from outside the building.
- If your CO alarm sounds, and no one is suffering from symptoms of CO poisoning, check to see if the battery needs replacing, or the alarm has reached its "end-of-life" before calling 9-1-1.