

Cooler Temperatures Increase the Risk for Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

As outdoor winter temperatures drop and the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning increases, residents are urged to be aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning due to improper use of heating or cooking devices. Carbon monoxide, or CO, is a dangerous gas that you cannot see, smell or taste. **Carbon monoxide can be deadly.** By knowing more about CO, you can protect yourself and your family from CO poisoning.

SOURCES OF CARBON MONOXIDE

CO can come from anything that burns fuels, especially if it is not used or vented in the right way.

- **Furnaces**
- **Wood stoves**
- **Kerosene heaters**
- **Generators**
- **Gas-powered home appliances**
- **Gas-powered tools**
- **Gas and charcoal grills**
- **Cars and trucks**

SYMPTOMS OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

Health effects occur when carbon monoxide enters the body through the lungs and attaches to the red blood cells that usually carry oxygen throughout the body. Early symptoms can appear at low levels of CO exposure, and often mimic the flu or food poisoning. Symptoms include fatigue, headache, dizziness, nausea and vomiting. The effects of exposure to higher levels of CO are more serious, and include brain damage and loss of consciousness. At high enough concentrations, it can kill you in a matter of minutes.

REDUCE YOUR RISK!

- Carbon monoxide alarms should be installed on every level of the home and outside sleeping areas. Carbon monoxide alarms need fresh batteries at least once every year, unless they are powered by sealed, 10-year batteries. Carbon monoxide alarms should be tested once a month to make sure they are working properly. Replace carbon monoxide detectors according to manufacturer recommendations. Never ignore a carbon monoxide alarm.
- Leave cars, and other vehicles running only if they are outside of your garage.
- Use kerosene heaters only when room doors are open and windows are open at least one inch.
- Run generators outside and away from windows, doors, and vents.
- Do not use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove or other gasoline or charcoal-burning devices inside your home, basement, garage or outside near a window.
- Do not use indoor gas cooking stoves for heat.

If you are experiencing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, call 911!

Additional information may be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/co/guidelines.htm> or by contacting the NJ Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Serving the communities of West Windsor, Robbinsville and Hightstown
(609) 936-8400