



Carbon Monoxide

The Silent Killer



Carbon Monoxide - The Silent Killer

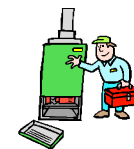
Carbon Monoxide (CO) is called the silent killer. You can't see it; you can't feel it and you can't smell it. The effects of CO can not be detected by today's advanced radioactive tests, such as a MRI, CT or X-ray. There are very specific tests to diagnose CO poisoning. Please contact your physician for more information.

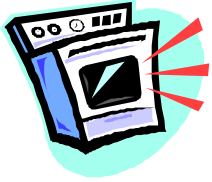
Poisoning Characteristics

- Often goes a long time undetected
- Masquerades as flu, fatigue, etc.
- Often many people are sick simultaneously
- Nearly always misdiagnosed by physicians
- May involve sick or dying pets

The main causes of Carbon Monoxide poisoning in your home are gas furnaces, hot water heaters and gas ovens, .i.e. any appliance with a gas flame. CO is most widely distributed in a home through your furnace by way of a cracked heat exchanger allowing carbon monoxide, which would go out through your flu, to enter your house by way of the furnace's blower. When measuring CO, a reading of less than 35 parts (particles of carbon) per million (particles) is considered the cut-off, or danger line.

Homeowners should have their furnace cleaned and checked every year prior to turning on the furnace. Most local papers have pre-season discount coupons for these services. The prices for these services generally run \$40 to \$60 and should include a visual inspection, an electronic CO inspection of your furnace including a filter replacement and checking of your thermostat, flu and chimney.





Another area of concern is your oven.

DO NOT USE YOUR OVEN TO HEAT WITH!!

Your oven emits large amounts of CO. There are building codes for range hoods and working windows in your kitchen, not for odors or smoke but for CO dissipation. Anytime you are using your oven for a long period of time, you should use the exhaust fan or open a window to ventilate the area. Carbon Monoxide is a heavy gas and will usually affect children, invalids, pets or people sleeping in a basement or close to a furnace first.

Carbon Monoxide detectors are available at home centers in your area. There are many different kinds and price ranges of detectors available. These range from "dots", small one inch circles that have a chemical in them that turns black when exposed to CO to battery operated detectors that emit an alarm when a preset level of CO is reached. The detectors most recommended are the electric plug-in alarm types that are calibrated to sound an alarm when a level of CO is reached. Most alarm companies have detectors that can be wired into your home that will sound an alarm and notify the fire department when triggered.

It is a consensus in the industry that the electric plug-in alarm and the home security alarms are the best. They have a more consistent reading and are less likely to fail, or give false readings, and you don't have to worry about batteries running low or changing batteries. Alarms should be located in the general vicinity of your furnace and installed 18 to 24 inches from the floor.



Community Action Agency of St. Louis County, Inc.
2709 Woodson Road
St. Louis, MO 63114
Phone: 314.863.0015

Hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Visit us online at www.caastlc.org

<u>Program</u>	<u>Extension</u>
Counseling	426
Employment	431
Energy	655
Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)	658
Family Support	654
Food	650
Housing	657
Special Programs	651
Weatherization	653

Please visit our website (www.caastlc.org) to find out more about our agency. It contains information on our programs and services, eligibility and income guidelines, required documentation, outreach sites, directions, upcoming events, employment opportunities, and more!

If you do not have Internet access at home, stop by your local library. The internet is available to use with a valid library card or current form of identification. Library cards are easy to obtain and are free to those living and paying taxes in their library district.

A Community Action Agency providing people with emergency and crisis intervention services. Helping the poor to become self-sufficient. An Equal Opportunity Employer & Fair Housing Services Provider.



March 2005