

CARBON MONOXIDE



Carbon monoxide is said to be the silent killer. Why? Because carbon monoxide is tasteless, colorless and odorless..and deadly.

When people think they do not have any carbon monoxide (CO) emissions because they can't smell it, they have smelt sulfides or other odorous parts of auto emissions they believe to be indicative of carbon monoxide. More reliable are the physical reactions to the presence of carbon monoxide: headaches, nausea and dizziness—especially if these symptoms occur only inside. If persons are in a closed atmosphere (especially in a building or vehicle) and have these symptoms, the exhaust system of heaters and fuel ignition should be investigated. Death can occur when prolonged exposure to higher levels of carbon monoxide occur.

Carbon monoxide is produced primarily from incomplete combustion of fuels such as kerosene, gasoline, oil, wood or charcoal; and it is almost impossible for complete combustion to occur in heating and auto ignition systems.

Here are some “Do’s and Don’ts “ regarding CO:

Do:

- Have all furnaces in buildings checked at the beginning of fall each year.
- Utilize heating systems that exhaust to the outside if possible.
- Maintain fresh-air ventilation when using kerosene or oil-fueled space heaters; keep a window slightly open in such instances.
- Purchase only CO detectors with UL certification.

Do NOT:

- Keep an automobile running inside a garage, even when the garage door is open; carbon monoxide fumes can “pool” in areas of the garage.
- Depend on a CO detector alone to replace the precautions listed above.
- Allow tree limbs, birds’ nests and other obstructions to block vent stacks.

