

# CARBON MONOXIDE (CO)

## Protect yourself and your family from carbon monoxide poisoning

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. Examples include:

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

### Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning

CO poisoning can feel like the flu without a fever, but in a very short amount of time it can become very serious.

CO can cause:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Vomiting
- Fatigue
- Passing out
- Shortness of breath
- **Death**

### If you think you have been exposed to carbon monoxide:

- Get yourself and others to fresh air immediately
- Call 911 or your local fire department
- Call the Northern New England Poison Center at **1-800-222-1222**
- Return to the area only after the fire department tells you it is safe

To learn more about carbon monoxide poisoning and to get information about CO alarms:

**Call 866-292-3474**

**Visit [www.maine.gov/dhhs/eohp/air/co.htm](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/eohp/air/co.htm)**

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention,  
Environmental and Occupation Health Programs

### How to prevent CO poisoning

- Place CO alarms close to all sleeping areas in your home, and change the batteries each time you change your clock for daylight savings time. **Never ignore a carbon monoxide alarm.**
- Have appliances, furnaces and heating systems installed and maintained by a professional.
- Check and clean your chimney at least once every year.
- Leave cars, snowmobiles 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.
- Burn charcoal in open, outdoor areas away from your home, cabin, garage, or other enclosed areas such as porches or tents.
- Use pressure washers, chainsaws and other gas-powered tools outside of your home, garage or other enclosed areas such as barns or sheds.



Maine Center for Disease  
Control and Prevention

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