

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD. FIRE / EMS DEPARTMENT



TIPsheet

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY'S NEW CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR LAW AND OTHER LIFE SAFETY CODE REQUIREMENTS, PLEASE CALL 301-583-1830 DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS.



Each year in America, carbon monoxide poisoning claims almost 500 lives and sends over 15,000 people to hospital emergency rooms for treatment.

UNDERSTANDING THE RISK

What is carbon monoxide (CO)? Carbon monoxide is an-odorless, colorless and toxic gas. Because it is impossible to see, taste or smell the toxic fumes; CO can kill you before you are aware it is in your home. At lower levels of exposure CO causes mild effects that are often mistaken for the flu. These symptoms include headaches, dizziness, disorientation, nausea and fatigue. The effects of CO exposure can vary greatly from person to person depending on age, overall health and the concentration and length of exposure.

Where does carbon monoxide come from? CO gas can come from several sources: gas-fired appliances, charcoal grills, wood-burning furnaces or fireplaces, motor vehicles and gas powered generators.

Who is at risk? Everyone is at risk for Carbon Monoxide Poisoning.

CARBON MONOXIDE CODE REQUIREMENTS

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014, MOST DWELLINGS IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY MUST HAVE CO DETECTORS INSTALLED.

General Requirements: Requirements for new and existing one and two family residential dwellings. The requirements for installation and maintenance of a carbon monoxide detector in a new or existing one and two family residential dwelling shall be at least one (1) carbon monoxide detector installed on each level of the dwelling in close proximity to sleeping quarters in any residence constructed or to be constructed with gas heating system, fuel burning appliances, and/or an attached garage. For a new residence, carbon monoxide detectors shall be directly hardwired to the buildings power supply and have a battery powered back up. For an existing residence, carbon monoxide detectors shall be AC and/or battery powered backup. Each carbon monoxide detector must comply with all applicable Federal and State regulations and if it is battery operated the battery must bear the label of a nationally recognized testing laboratory. Each detector must be an Underwriter Laboratory (UL) 2034 listed product or its equivalent. The owner/occupant of each dwelling shall be responsible for installing, inspecting, and maintaining the carbon monoxide detectors.

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY

For maximum protection, a detector should be installed on every level of the home. Place it at least 15 feet away from fuel burning appliances. Mount the CO Detector on the wall at least 12 inches from the ceiling and no lower than 5 feet from the floor. Make sure nothing is covering or obstructing the unit. Do not place in dead air spaces, or next to a window or door. Carbon monoxide detectors measure levels of carbon monoxide over time and are designed to sound an alarm before an average healthy adult would experience symptoms. It is very possible that you may not be experiencing symptoms when you hear the alarm. This does not mean that carbon monoxide is not present. Have a qualified professional check all fuel burning appliances, furnaces, and venting and chimney systems at least once a year.

Never use your range or oven to help heat your home and never use a charcoal grill or hibachi in your home or garage.

Never keep a generator or car running in a garage. Even if the garage doors are open normal circulation will not provide enough fresh air to reliably prevent a dangerous buildup of Carbon monoxide.

How to check your Carbon Monoxide Detector: Just like checking your smoke alarm we request that you check it monthly and if it is battery operated or battery back-up, change the batteries twice a year.

CALL 911 IF YOU HAVE ANY ILLNESS OR SYMPTOMS