Often called the silent killer, CO is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil and methane) burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel can be sources of carbon monoxide.

- CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home and in other locations where required by applicable laws, codes or standards.
- Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for placement and mounting height.
- Choose a CO alarm that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratory, Factory Mutual, etc.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month; replace them according to the manufacturer’s recommendations.
- If the audible trouble signal sounds, check for low batteries. If the battery is low, replace it. If it still sounds, call the fire department.
- If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door. Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for. Call for help from a safe location and stay there until emergency personnel arrive.
- If you want to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Do not run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open normal circulation will not provide enough fresh air to reliably prevent a dangerous buildup of Carbon Monoxide. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not covered with snow.
- During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- A generator should be used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vent openings.
- Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO- only use outside and maintain a safe distance from buildings. Recommended safe distance is ten feet from a structure.
- Have fuel-burning equipment and chimneys inspected by a professional every year before the heating season.
- Never use your oven to heat your home!

**What actions do I take if my carbon monoxide alarm goes off?**

**If no one is feeling ill:**
1. Silence the alarm
2. Turn off all appliances and sources of combustion (furnace, fireplace, dryer, etc.)
3. Ventilate the house with fresh air by opening doors and windows
4. Call a qualified professional to investigate the source or the possible CO buildup.

**If illness is a factor:**
1. Evacuate all occupants immediately.
2. Determine how many occupants are ill and determine their symptoms.
3. Call your local emergency number and when relaying information to the dispatcher, include the number of people feeling ill and include their symptoms.
4. Do not re-enter the home without the approval of a fire department representative.
5. Call a qualified professional to repair the source of the CO.

**FACTS**

- A person can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a longer period of time (Chronic) or by a large amount of CO over a shorter amount of time (Acute).
- In 2005, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 61,100 non-fire CO incidents in which carbon monoxide was found, or an average of seven calls per hour.
- Each year in America, more than 150 people die from accidental non-fire related CO poisoning associated with consumer products.