

# 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
- Wood stoves
- Kerosene heaters
- Generators
- Gas-powered home appliances
- Gas-powered tools
- Gas and charcoal grills
- 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
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Passing out
- **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 [maine.gov/healthyhomes](http://maine.gov/healthyhomes)**

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention,  
Environmental and Occupational 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.



Paul R. LePage, Governor

Department of Health  
and Human Services  
Maine People Living  
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner