

Safe Kids Snohomish County

P.O. Box 1629
Everett, WA 98206
www.snosafekids.org



A Safer You, A Safer Me

December 17, 2010

CONTACT: Kristen Thorstenson, Public Education Specialist/Public Information Officer, (360) 363-8507 or (425) 754-4364, kthorstenson@marysvillewa.gov

Carbon Monoxide - The Silent Killer

MARYSVILLE, WA – Creeping silently through your home, there's a killer that gives no warning. This killer is carbon monoxide. An invisible and odorless gas, carbon monoxide (CO) is produced when burning any fuel, such as gasoline, propane, natural gas, oil, wood, or charcoal. It is a silent killer, which causes illness by decreasing the amount of oxygen present in the body.

Young children are especially vulnerable to the effects of carbon monoxide, because of their smaller bodies. Children process carbon monoxide differently than adults, may be more severely affected by it, and may show symptoms sooner.

You won't know that you have a carbon monoxide leak, without a working detector. If you burn any fuels for heat or cooking, be sure that you have a working carbon monoxide detector and deter this silent killer.



Follow some simple safety tips to help protect your family.

Know the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

- The most common symptoms include headache, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, and confusion. In severe cases, the person may lose consciousness or die.
- CO poisoning can often be mistaken for other illnesses, such as the flu.
- Often, more than one person in the household will suffer symptoms at the same time.

To decrease risk of CO poisoning the following tips are recommended:

- Install a CO alarm outside every sleeping area and on every level of your home.
- Place CO alarms at least 15 feet away from every fuel-burning appliance to reduce the number of nuisance alarms.
- Test alarms every month and replace them every five years.
- Make sure alarms can be heard when you test them and practice an escape plan with your entire family.
- Have all gas, oil or coal burning appliances inspected by a technician every year to ensure they are working correctly and are properly ventilated.
- Never use a stove for heating.
- Do not use a grill, generator or camping stove inside your home, garage or near a window.
- Never leave a car, SUV, or motorcycle engine running inside a garage, even if the garage door is open.
- CO can accumulate anywhere in or around your boat, so install a CO alarm on your motorboat.

If your CO alarm goes off, follow these steps:

- Get everyone out of the house as quickly as possible into fresh air. Then call for help from a neighbor's home or a cell phone outside of your home.
- If someone is experiencing CO poisoning symptoms, call 911 for medical attention.
- If no one is experiencing symptoms, call the fire department. They will let you know when it is safe to re-enter your home.

