

STAY SAFE WHEN KEEPING OUT THE COLD

Tips to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning

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In order to stay warm this winter, it is likely that you will be burning some type of fuel. Wood, kerosene, and oil all help keep you and your family toasty when temperatures plunge. But along with the welcome heat, fuels create something else that can be dangerous.



Carbon monoxide a colorless, odorless gas is created by burning any fuel. When the burning is occurs as designed, the levels of carbon monoxide are low and not dangerous. But if appliances are not working correctly, fatal levels of the gas can be released into your home. Every year about 140 people in Maine go to the hospital due to carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure to take steps this winter to protect your family!



- **Know the symptoms.** Headaches, dizziness, confusion, nausea and wooziness can all be signs of carbon monoxide poisoning. Many of the symptoms are flu-like, so it is not always easy to know what might be the cause. One sign that carbon monoxide might be to blame is if you feel ill in your house, but much better when somewhere else. If these early signs are not noticed, the situation can quickly become serious and death can result.

- **Check your appliances.** Before the start of the winter, check that your heating appliances are functioning well and safely.

- **Be safe when the power goes out.** Never use outdoor cooking devices like camp stoves or charcoal grills indoors. Make sure that your generator is a safe distance from any windows, doors or vents.

- **Buy carbon monoxide detectors.** Because you cannot smell or see carbon monoxide, detectors are the only way to know if your home is unsafe. Place them near all sleeping areas and if one goes off, evacuate and call the fire department.



For more information visit:

www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/coftsht.html

www.maine.gov/dhhs/eohp/air/co.htm

Thanks to Dani O'Rourke-Suchoff, AmeriCorps Member for article development.

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1/2011

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Richmond Area Health Center – Richmond
Rangeley Family Medicine – Rangeley
Strong Area Health & Dental Center – Strong
Sheepscot Valley Health Center – Coopers Mills
Western Maine Family Health Center – Livermore Falls