

# Hazard: Carbon Monoxide & Fuel Combustion Products

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**Identity of Hazard(s):** Carbon monoxide, or CO, is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death. CO is found in combustion fumes, such as those produced by cars and trucks, small gasoline engines, stoves, lanterns, burning charcoal and wood, and gas ranges and heating systems.<sup>1</sup>

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**Primary Health Outcome(s):** Carbon monoxide poisoning<sup>2</sup>

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**Health Alert!** Each year in America, more than 150 people die from accidental non-fire related carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning associated with consumer products. These products include faulty, improperly-used or incorrectly-vented fuel-burning appliances such as furnaces, stoves, water heaters and fireplaces.<sup>2</sup>

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## **Gain Control: Actions You Can Take<sup>2</sup>**

- Install and maintain CO alarms inside your home to provide early warning of carbon monoxide. CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each separate sleeping area, on every level of the home.
  - Have fuel-burning heating equipment (fireplaces, furnaces, water heaters, wood stoves, coal stoves, space heaters and portable heaters) and chimneys inspected by a professional every year.
  - Open the damper for proper ventilation before using a fireplace.
  - Never use your oven or stovetop to heat your home.
  - When purchasing new heating and cooking equipment, select products tested and labeled by a recognized testing laboratory.
  - Make sure all fuel-burning vented equipment is vented to the outside. Keep the venting for exhaust clear and unblocked.
  - If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Never run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open.
  - Only use barbecue grills outside, away from all doors, windows, vents and other building openings. Some grills can produce CO gas. Never use grills inside the home or the garage, even if the doors are open.
  - Use portable generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from all doors, windows, vents and other building openings to prevent exhaust fumes from entering the home.
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## **Local Resources for Detroit Residents:**

- The Detroit Department of Buildings and Safety Engineering (BSEED): (313) 628-2451
  - Property Maintenance Division can handle rental property issues with escaping gas into the air
- CLEARCorps Detroit: (313) 924-4000

<sup>1</sup><http://www.cdc.gov/co/default.htm>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.usfa.fema.gov/citizens/co/fswy17.shtm>