

## Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning at Work

### What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (also known as CO) is a gas that is produced when fuels, like gas, kerosene and oil, wood or other materials are burned. Carbon monoxide can be dangerous, even in small amounts, because it blocks oxygen from going into your body and can lead to death in a very short time. It is odorless, tasteless and invisible, so you may be exposed without knowing. That is why carbon monoxide is sometimes called “the silent killer.”



There are many places where you can be exposed to carbon monoxide while on the job. Some likely places for exposure are construction sites; boiler rooms; warehouses; pulp, paper and steel production facilities; around docks and blast furnaces; and any place where you are using fuel-powered tools and equipment. You should also be careful if you are a:

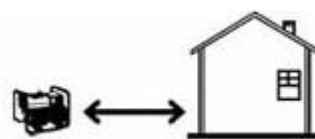
- |                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ■ Forklift operator            | ■ Construction Worker            |
| ■ Garage mechanic              | ■ Diesel engine operator         |
| ■ Firefighter                  | ■ Welder                         |
| ■ Organic chemical synthesizer | ■ Toll booth or tunnel attendant |
| ■ Metal oxide reducer          | ■ Customs inspector              |
| ■ Taxi driver                  | ■ Police officer                 |

Fortunately, there are a few simple steps that you can take to ensure that you and your co-workers will remain safe at work:

- **DO** make sure your workplace is in compliance with the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) -mandated carbon monoxide permissible exposure limits.
- **DO** read and follow all of the instructions and pay attention to the warning labels on ALL fuel-powered tools, including generators and power washers, that you use at work.
- **DO NOT** use fuel-powered tools, including power washers, heaters and forklifts, in enclosed spaces where levels of gas can build up - such as homes under construction and tented-off areas.
- **DO** pay attention to flu-like symptoms, especially if more than one person has them. Headache, dizziness, confusion, fatigue and feeling sick to your stomach are all common symptoms of carbon monoxide exposure.

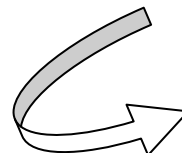


No



Yes!

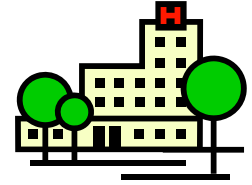
Please see page 2 for more tips on preventing carbon monoxide poisoning.





- **DO** move outside to fresh air immediately if a carbon monoxide leak is suspected and report the situation to your manager.

- **DO** report any situation to your employer that might cause carbon monoxide to accumulate.
- **DO** be alert to ventilation problems - especially in enclosed areas where gases of burning fuels may be released.
- **DO** go to the emergency room or call 911 if you feel sick. Tell them that you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide poisoning can be determined by a quick blood test done soon after exposure. The faster you are treated, the better your chances for a quick recovery.



**DO NOT ignore symptoms.**  
**You and your coworkers could DIE within minutes if you do nothing.**  
**Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room as quickly as possible**  
**if you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning.**

## **For more information:**

### **Occupational Safety and Health Administration**

[http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_General\\_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf)

### **Michigan State University Occupational & Environmental Medicine: MIFACE**

[http://www.oem.msu.edu/MIFACE\\_Alerts/Alert\\_10.pdf](http://www.oem.msu.edu/MIFACE_Alerts/Alert_10.pdf)

### **Washington State Department of Labor and Industries**

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Topics/AtoZ/CarbonMonoxide/default.asp>