

Food Trucks and Carbon Monoxide Poisoning



Did you know that the areas around food trucks can have high-levels of carbon monoxide (CO), a poisonous gas? **You cannot see, smell or taste CO, but it can be deadly when you breathe it in.** Anything fuel-burning, like idling food trucks and running portable generators, produce CO. One portable generator produces hundreds of times more CO than one car. CO can build up in enclosed and partially enclosed areas, like food trucks, trailers and canopies. Food truck owners and workers can take steps to prevent CO poisoning.

Anything fuel-burning gives off CO.

Appliances and equipment that burn carbon-based fuels, like gasoline, charcoal, propane and diesel, give off CO. Common ways food trucks burn fuel are:

- Generators.
- Vehicles, including cars, trucks and RVs.
- Grills.
- Refrigerators.
- Space heaters.



Be Aware.

Properly maintain and use fuel-burning appliances and equipment...



- Have fuel-burning appliances, including gas ranges, refrigerators and exhaust systems, inspected by a professional at least once a year. Make sure these items are working correctly and vented properly.
- Never use fuel-burning appliances and equipment intended for outdoor use inside, including grills and heaters.
- Use fuel-burning cooking equipment only when the exhaust systems are on. [96:12.1.1]*
- Make sure vents are cleared of debris.
- Remember CO can build up and linger for hours, even after fuel-burning appliances and equipment, including portable generators, have been shut off.

... Including portable generators.



- Use portable generators outside. Never use one inside an enclosed or partially enclosed space.
- Run portable generators **at least 12 feet with 20 feet being optimal**, away from people and enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. [96:17.6.2.3(1)]*
- Keep portable generators far from windows, doors and air intakes.
- Vent portable generator exhaust away from enclosed spaces, including buildings and other food trucks. Pay attention to wind direction. [96:17.6.2.3(2&3)]*
- Create physical barriers between the public and portable generators, like a wall or partition. [96:17.6.2.2]*

Pay attention to vehicle exhaust.



- Have fuel-burning vehicles inspected at least once a year. Repair exhaust leaks right away. CO can build up inside the car from leaks.
- Never sit in a parked food truck with the engine running for a long period of time.
- Never run fuel-burning food trucks in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces.

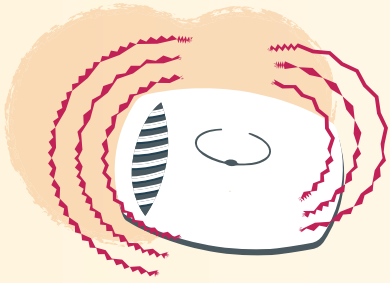
*You can find food truck codes and standards, including the ones used in this document at the [National Fire Protection Association](#).



Stay Prepared.

Install CO detectors.

- Install a battery-operated CO detector in food trucks. Check with the local municipality for more information.
- Test the CO detector before every food truck use.
- Bring extra batteries.
- Replace CO detector batteries twice a year. An easy way to remember is during time changes (spring and fall).
- Replace your CO detector according to the manufacturer's instructions.



Know CO poisoning symptoms.

CO poisoning has flu-like symptoms, including:

- Headache.
- Vomiting.
- Chest tightness.
- Unconsciousness.
- Dizziness.
- Fatigue.
- Confusion.
- Coma.
- Nausea.
- Weakness.

Remember: People who are sleeping or intoxicated might not notice CO poisoning symptoms before it's too late.

Symptoms should not be ignored.

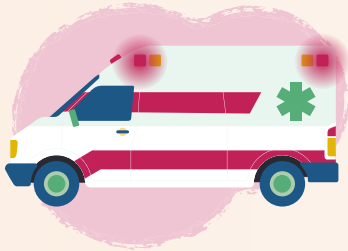
You could DIE within minutes if you do nothing.



Get to Fresh Air.

If you suspect CO poisoning, have symptoms or if your CO detector goes off:

1. Leave the enclosed or partially enclosed space and move to fresh air right away.
2. Call 911.
3. Stay away from the enclosed or partially enclosed space until the fire department tells you it is safe to return, even if you aren't experiencing symptoms.



CO poisoning is preventable.



Be Aware



Stay Prepared



Get to Fresh Air

Learn more about CO poisoning.

Go to Michigan.gov/CarbonMonoxide or scan the QR code.



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