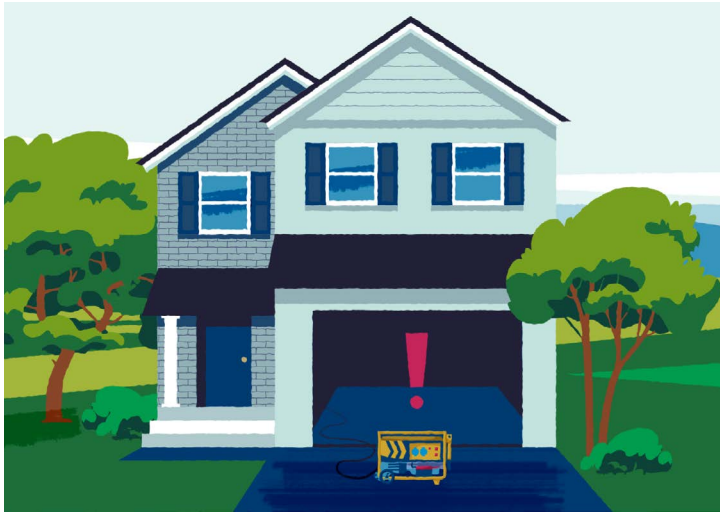
Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning at Home

Most carbon monoxide (CO) poisonings take place at home due to fuel-burning equipment, like furnaces, water heaters, running vehicles and portable generators. **CO is a poisonous gas you cannot see, taste or smell, but it can be deadly when you breathe it in**. CO can build up in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces, like your home, garage or shed. It is important to protect yourself and your loved ones against CO poisoning at home.

Anything that burns fuel releases CO.

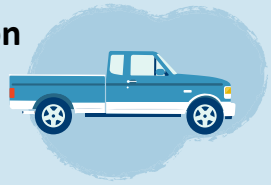
CO is formed when carbon-based fuels, like gasoline, natural gas, propane and wood are burned. At home, fuel-burning devices include:

- Vehicles.
- Furnaces or boilers.
- Water heaters.
- Portable generators.
- Stoves and ovens.
- Fireplaces and wood-burning stoves.
- Space heaters.
- Clothes dryers.
- Charcoal grills.
- Lawnmowers and lawn equipment.
- Power washers.



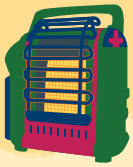
Be Aware.

Pay attention to vehicle exhaust.



- Never run fuel-burning vehicles in the garage, barn or other enclosed or partially enclosed space, even if the door is open.
- Have fuel-burning vehicles inspected at least once a year. Repair exhaust leaks right away. CO can build up inside vehicles from leaks.
- Never sit in a parked vehicle with the engine running for a long period of time, especially if the vehicle is in snow.
- When your car is running and your liftgate is open, CO is being pulled in. It's best to turn the vehicle off.

Maintain and use fuel-burning equipment correctly.

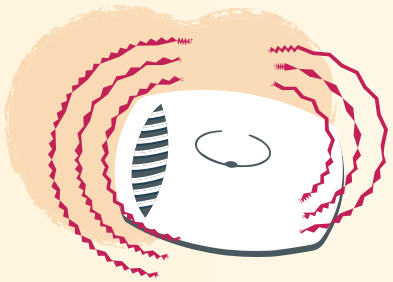


- Have a professional inspect heating systems, water heaters, and any other fuel-burning appliances and equipment every year to make sure these items are working correctly and vented properly.
- Never use fuel-burning appliances and equipment intended for outdoor use when inside.
- Use a gas range or oven for cooking, but never to heat your home.
- Charcoal should never be burned indoors.

Properly use portable generators.

- Never use a portable generator inside enclosed or partially enclosed spaces.
- Run portable generators at least 20 feet from people and enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. If needed, use an extra-long extension cord with your generator.
- Keep portable generators far from windows, doors and air intakes.
- Remember, CO can build up and linger for hours, even after the generator has shut off.

Stay Prepared.



Install CO detectors.

- Install 10-year lithium battery CO detectors on all levels of your home and near all sleeping areas to alert you of CO.
- Test CO detectors monthly or according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- If you do not have lithium battery CO detectors, replace alkaline 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.

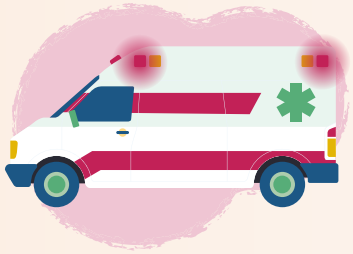
CO poisoning has flu-like symptoms, including:

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

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.

MDHHS
Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

MDHHS-Pub-1945 (9-26)

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) does not discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of race, national origin, color, sex, disability, religion, age, height, weight, familial status, partisan considerations, or genetic information. Sex-based discrimination includes, but is not limited to, discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, and pregnancy.