



Tulsa Fire Department

Protecting Community Life, Health, Property and the Environment
By Delivering Quality Life and Fire Safety Services.

Community Relations / Public Education Branch

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Carbon Monoxide Safety

Often called the silent killer, carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane) burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel are potential sources of carbon monoxide. Vehicles or generators running in an attached garage can also produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.

A person can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a longer period of time or by a large amount of CO over a shorter amount of time. The Tulsa Fire Department offers the following life-saving tips that could make a big difference to you and increase your survival rate dramatically.

Carbon Monoxide Life-Saving Tips

- Have fuel-burning heating equipment and chimneys inspected by a professional every year before cold weather sets in.
- When using a fireplace, open the flue for adequate ventilation.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Do not run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not covered with snow.
- During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- A generator should be used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vent openings.
- Only use barbecue grills — which can produce CO — outside.
- Use battery-powered lights in tents, trailers and motor homes and motor boats.

Did You Know?

- The dangers of CO exposure depend on a number of variables, including the victim's health and activity level.
- Infants, pregnant women, and people with physical conditions that limit their body's ability to use oxygen (i.e. emphysema, asthma, heart disease) can be more severely affected by lower concentrations of CO than healthy adults would be..
- In 2005, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 61,100 non-fire CO incidents in which carbon monoxide was found, or an average of seven such calls per hour.
- For more information on how you can help prevent fire deaths, please contact The Tulsa Fire Departments Community Relations / Public Education Branch @ 669-6186