



New law requires carbon monoxide detectors in homes

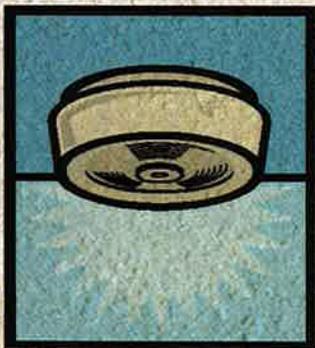
According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, more than 2,000 Americans die every year from accidental carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. These deaths are preventable with the installation of carbon monoxide detectors in your home, now required under Illinois law. The Tinley Park Fire Department is reminding residents about the importance of installing both carbon monoxide and smoke detectors in your home. Follow the law and be safe!

Carbon monoxide (CO)—often called the “silent killer”—is a colorless, odorless and tasteless poisonous gas. Fuel burning appliances such as furnaces, ovens, clothes dryers, water heaters and space heaters, as well as fireplaces, charcoal or gas grills, and wood burning stoves, produce it.

When used improperly or if malfunctioning, these appliances can cause CO to back up into the home, causing injury or even death. People exposed to high levels of CO may have symptoms similar to the flu, but without a fever. You may:

- Experience nausea, sleepiness, fatigue/weakness and disorientation
- Feel dizzy
- Have a severe headache

If you experience any of these symptoms of if your CO detector alarm is activated, call 911 and get out of your house!



Carbon Monoxide Detectors are widely available in local home improvement, hardware and department stores. Remember, they do not replace proper use and maintenance of your fuel-burning appliances. And unlike a smoke detector, where you can easily confirm the cause of the alarm, CO is invisible and odorless, so it's harder to tell if an alarm is false or a real emergency.

Don't let installation of a CO detector lull you into a false sense of security. Preventing CO from becoming a problem in your home should work together with installation of an alarm. Follow the checklist included in this brochure.

When you shop for a CO detector, do some research on features and don't select solely on the basis of cost. Non-governmental organizations such as Consumers Union (publisher of Consumer Reports), the American Gas Association, and Underwriters Laboratories (UL) can help you make an informed decision. Look for UL certification on any detector you purchase. Carefully follow manufacturers' instructions for its placement, use, and maintenance.

Here is a summary of the new law:

- Carbon monoxide alarms must comply with rules and regulations of the Illinois State Fire Marshal's Office;
- Every dwelling unit must be equipped with at least one detector within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping purposes. The only exceptions are residences that do not rely on fossil fuel combustion for heat, ventilation or hot water, are not connected in any way to a garage, and are not sufficiently close to any ventilated source of carbon monoxide as determined by the local building commissioner;
- It is the responsibility of the property owner to install and maintain the alarm; and
- Alarms may be battery powered, plug-in with battery backup, or wired into the structure's AC power line with secondary battery backup.

If you have any questions about carbon monoxide detectors or the new law, call the Tinley Park Fire Prevention Bureau at 708-444-5200.

Please use the following CO safety checklist to help protect your home.

- Have you installed at least one battery powered CO alarm or AC-powered unit with battery backup on each level of your home and near sleeping areas?
- Has a licensed professional inspected the heating systems and other fuel-burning appliances in your home annually?
- Have you made sure that fuel-burning appliances are installed properly and operate according to the manufacturer's instructions?
- Do you have all fireplaces cleaned and inspected annually and keep chimneys clear of animal nest, leaves and residue to ensure proper venting?
- Have you made sure not to block or seal the exhaust flues or ducts used by water heaters, ranges and clothes dryers?
- Are you careful not to leave your car running in an attached garage or carport?
- Are you careful not to use ovens or stoves to heat your home?
- Do not use charcoal or gas grills inside or operate outdoors near a window where CO fumes could enter your home.
- Do you check all carbon monoxide alarms in your Home? Do they need new batteries?
- Do you replace CO alarms every five years?
- Are you careful not to use generators and grills indoors during a power outage?



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16250 S. Oak Park Avenue
Tinley Park, IL 60477
708.444.5000
www.tinleypark.org



Carbon Monoxide Detectors in the Home

It's the Law!

