

DISASTER QUICK TIPS: CARBON MONOXIDE

Quick Tips:

1. Any fuel-burning machine can create carbon monoxide.
2. Carbon monoxide can KILL YOU!
3. Know the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning (below).
4. Buy and install a plug-in carbon monoxide alarm with a battery back-up or a battery-operated alarm.

What is carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide is a gas. It has no odor, no color and no taste. Sometimes it is called the “silent killer.”

Carbon monoxide can be a problem after floods. People sometimes use portable generators for making power. Other gas powered tools are often used for cleaning.

NEVER use a generator, fuel-powered tools, gas or charcoal grill in the house, garage, in enclosed areas, or near windows, doors, vents, window air conditioners, and other openings.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning

The most common symptom of carbon monoxide poisoning is a severe headache.

Carbon monoxide may also cause severe fatigue, weakness, chest pain in those with heart disease, shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, confusion and lack of coordination. If not removed to fresh air, carbon monoxide can cause loss of consciousness and death.

If you start to feel sick or dizzy while using fuel-burning equipment, get to fresh air right away. *DO NOT WAIT!*

If you have a poison emergency, call the Minnesota Poison Control Center at: 1-800-222-1222, or if the person is not breathing, call 911 for immediate help.

Buy and install a carbon monoxide alarm

Minnesota law requires that homes have a carbon monoxide alarm within 10 feet of every room used for sleeping. The following dates are when this new law is effective:

- January 1, 2007 for all new single family and multifamily homes (permits issued after 1/1/2007);
- August 1, 2008 for all existing single family homes; and
- August 1, 2009 for all multi-family homes.



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Note: MDH has detailed fact sheets on these topics. See back page.

MDH Environmental Health Contacts:**Asbestos**

Asbestos and Lead Compliance: 651-201-4620

Web Site: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/asbestos

Carbon Monoxide and Mold

MDH Indoor Air Quality: 651-201-4601 or 800-798-9050

Email: health.indoorair@state.mn.us

Web Site: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/air

Cleaning Up and Food Safety

MDH Food, Beverage and Lodging: 651-201-4500

Email: health.foodlodging@state.mn.us

Web Site: www.health.state.mn.us/foodsafety

Drinking Water**Public Water**

MDH Drinking Water Protection: 651-201-4700

Email: health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us

Web Site: www.health.state.mn.us/water

Wells and Well Water

MDH Well Management: 651-201-4600 or 1-800-383-9808

Email: health.wells@state.mn.us

Web Site: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/wells

MDH Environmental Health Division Emergency Program Contacts:

www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/contactus.htm

MDH Environmental Health Flood information Web site:

www.health.state.mn.us/floods

If you require this document in another format such as large print, Braille, or cassette tape, contact 651-201-5000 or 1-800-657-3908. For deaf or hard of hearing TTY: 651-201-5797



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