

# What is carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a gas that can be produced by incomplete combustion when carbon-based materials — wood, propane, charcoal, natural gas, oil, gasoline and kerosene — are burned. CO has no odor or color.

**CO symptoms** are flu-like: Headaches, dizziness, vomiting or nausea, weakness and tightness of the chest. Be suspicious if all members of your family share the same symptoms and the symptoms clear up when you're outside the house. If symptoms persist, see a doctor.

## To prevent CO:

1. **Have a licensed heating contractor inspect the heating system and appliances every year.**
2. Never use a gas range to heat your home.
3. Keep flues and chimneys free of debris.
4. Clear snow and ice from exhaust and combustion air vents for gas appliances.
5. *Use a clean filter in your furnace*—Standard air filters need to be changed once a month during the heating season. Check the owner's manual.
6. Do not operate a barbecue grill in a closed area, such as the garage.
7. Don't start or run gasoline-powered equipment in a closed area.
8. Check for rusted or pitted flue pipes from the furnace and water heater. Don't patch the pipes; replace them immediately.

## If you suspect CO:

- ◆ Check to see if anyone is experiencing symptoms of carbon monoxide. If anyone is overcome by CO, **call 911**.
- ◆ Do not panic. Get everyone out of the building.
- ◆ Get help for anyone in need of medical care.
- ◆ Open doors, windows to let in fresh air.
- ◆ Turn the thermostat to the lowest setting.
- ◆ Turn off all unvented appliances (range, auxiliary heater).
- ◆ Turn the water heater to the lowest setting.
- ◆ Check flues for obstructions.
- ◆ Check for soot around the water heater and furnace.
- ◆ Check for a vehicle or small engine operating in an attached garage or basement.

If you are unable to determine the cause, call a licensed heating contractor or our emergency number, **402.554.7777**.

**If you suspect CO,**

**call 911**