

GET TO KNOW CO



Carbon Monoxide is the “**invisible killer.**” Known as CO, this poisonous gas is odorless and colorless.

Each year in the U.S., unintentional CO poisoning kills over 400 people and sends more than 20,000 to the emergency room.

You need CO alarms at home if you have any of these risk factors:

- any type of fireplace,
- an attached garage, or
- gas-powered appliances such as a water heater, stove, oven, dryer, furnace, heater, or generator

Just like smoke alarms, CO alarms need regular testing and battery changes.

However, CO alarms do not detect smoke. You need **BOTH** CO alarms and smoke alarms to protect your family, or a “combination alarm.”

Install a CO alarm on every level of the home, and near every sleeping area.



Turn the page for more CO alarm information, or visit www.PflugervilleFire.org



Get to Know **CO**: continued

● **What are the symptoms of CO poisoning?**

If someone has flu-like symptoms such as dizziness, headache, fatigue, nausea, and/or irregular breathing, evacuate then seek medical help.

● **My fireplace uses wood. Is CO still a risk?**

CO is produced anytime a fuel is burned. All types of fireplaces can produce CO including wood and charcoal-burning fireplaces. Also, all furnaces, heaters and fireplaces should be cleaned and/or inspected every year by a certified professional.

● **Is it ever safe to let a car idle in the garage?**

No, it's never safe to idle a car in an attached garage -- not even when the garage door is open.

● **Was my home built with CO alarms?**

Only recently were builders required to put CO alarms in new homes. We recommend looking on the front (and back if needed) of your alarms to see if they read "CO" or "carbon monoxide."

● **Where should CO alarms be placed?**

CO does not rise like smoke. There are two styles of CO alarms: plug-in, or wall/ceiling mounted. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for installation and care. Position CO alarms where there is good ventilation and nothing obstructing them.

● **Can I get an alarm for both CO and smoke?**

Yes. This is called a **combination alarm** (which is *not* the same thing as a "dual sensor" smoke alarm).

● **How do I take care of CO alarms?**

Push the test button at least once a month, and replace the batteries at least once a year.

● **How long do CO alarms last?**

CO alarms are only designed to work reliably for 5 to 7 years. **This is shorter than the typical 8 to 10-year lifespan of a smoke alarm!** So if you buy a combo smoke/CO alarm, replace it within 5 to 7 years – or immediately if it doesn't pass a test with new batteries, or if it makes "end of life" chirps.

● **What do I do if my CO alarm beeps /goes off?**

Immediately open the windows and doors for ventilation, evacuate everyone, and call 9-1-1.