



# Carbon Monoxide Safety

*Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, and heating oil, burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel are potential sources of carbon monoxide. Vehicles or generators running in an enclosed garage can also produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide. You can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a long period of time or by a large amount of CO over a short period of time.*

- Signs & symptoms of CO poisoning may include the following: dull headache, weakness, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, shortness of breath, confusion, blurred vision, and loss of consciousness.
- CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. Test CO alarms monthly.
- Be sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of any debris like snow build-up or nesting material.
- Never run a vehicle or other fueled engine inside a garage or other enclosed space where poisonous levels of CO can build up.
- Fuel-operated generators should be used in well-ventilated locations outdoors and away from windows, doors and vent openings.
- Gas or charcoal grills can produce dangerous levels of CO and should only be used outside.
- If the CO alarm sounds:
  1. **Immediately** move to fresh air outdoors or by an open window or door.
  2. **Call 911** and have the fire department check your home for CO gas.

*For more information, contact the Santa Fe County Fire Prevention/Risk Reduction Office at (505) 995-6517 or email: [fireprevention@santafecountynm.gov](mailto:fireprevention@santafecountynm.gov)*

