

**SaskPower**

has a long-standing commitment to promote safety and contribute to a better way of life wherever our customers live and work.



For CO emergencies,  
call **911** or

your fire department number

or your local licenced  
gas contractor.



SaskPower

Gas and Electrical Inspections

About

# Carbon Monoxide



**SaskPower**

Helping our customers stay safe

## what is it?

Often called “the silent killer,” carbon monoxide (CO) is odorless, colourless, tasteless, non-irritating — and poisonous.

It’s produced when common fuels, such as natural gas, kerosene, fuel oil, wood, coal and charcoal, do not burn completely. When fuel is burned, adequate air supply must be present to ensure complete combustion and the smoke and/or fumes must be properly vented outside your home.

When you inhale CO, your red blood cells are deprived of oxygen. Prolonged exposure to high concentrations of CO leads to unconsciousness, convulsions, brain damage and ultimately death.

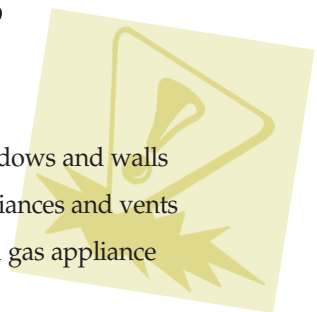
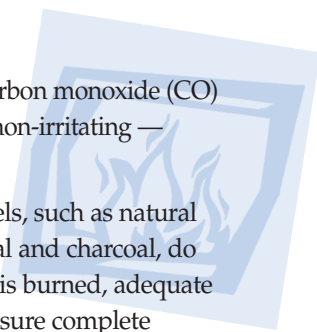
### Common CO sources in your home include:

- clogged or blocked fireplace/chimney and cracked or loose furnace vent pipes
- corroded/disconnected water heater/gas dryer vent pipes
- woodstoves/fireplaces, kerosene/coal stoves/heaters, barbecues
- attached garage

## warning signs

### Household signs include:

- stuffy air
- excessive moisture on windows and walls
- soot build-up around appliances and vents
- a yellow flame in a natural gas appliance instead of blue
- a pilot light that keeps going out



### Personal symptoms include:

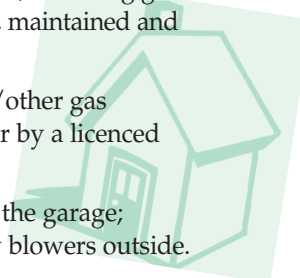
- dizziness
- headache
- nausea
- burning eyes
- vomiting
- loss of muscle control
- fatigue

Symptom severity varies, depending on concentration and length of CO exposure, as well as the general health of the victim. Since these symptoms match those of the flu and other common illnesses, CO poisoning is often difficult to recognize.

## protect your home

### There are a number of precautions you can take to make your home CO safe:

- Ensure fuel-burning appliances, including gas ranges, are properly installed, maintained and inspected.
- Have chimneys and heating/other gas equipment serviced each year by a licenced gas contractor.
- Never run your car/truck in the garage; start lawn mowers and snow blowers outside.
- Use barbecues outside away from doors and windows.
- Open a window to replace air before you light a fireplace/woodstove. Keep it open until the fire is completely out.
- Keep flue vents and chimneys clear of debris and other blockages, including frost and snow.
- Ensure furnace/water heater vent pipes to the chimney are in good shape.
- Ensure furnace panels/grills are in place and the fan compartment door is secure.



## detectors

Installing a CO detector in your home may help you feel secure, as it can alert you to danger before symptoms are noticed. However, it’s important to realize that CO detectors are your second line of defense after maintenance and safety precautions are undertaken.

### If your CO detector alarms...

...and someone in your house is experiencing symptoms of CO poisoning, ensure everyone leaves the house immediately. Call 911 or the fire department from a neighbour’s telephone.

...and no one is suffering CO symptoms, remain calm. Take immediate steps to determine the reason for the alarm. It’s possible the detector reacted to:

- dead/low battery
- exhaust fumes from a nearby vehicle
- prolonged humidity if installed near a bathroom
- chemicals, cleaning products or cigarette smoke nearby
- accumulated low levels of CO.

...and no one is ill, but you cannot explain why the detector alarmed, open your doors and windows for fresh air. Call a licenced gas contractor to inspect your appliances and check for other possible sources of CO.

