Prevent the Silent Killer – Practice Carbon Monoxide Safety

Winter is almost here! When buildings are sealed up against cold weather, there's a greater chance that carbon monoxide (CO), a colorless and odorless gas, can build to potentially dangerous levels in your home or business. Because you can't see or smell it, CO is often called "the silent killer."

CO can cause unconsciousness, brain damage and even death. Children are especially vulnerable to CO poisoning. Symptoms of CO poisoning are often mistaken for those of the flu – headaches, nausea, vomiting, dizziness and fatigue – and tend to clear up when you breathe fresh air.

All fuel-burning equipment such as furnaces, boilers, ranges, water heaters, space heaters, grills and standby generators that aren't working properly or are misused may produce CO. To prevent CO poisoning, take the necessary precautions:

Install CO detectors to protect your family, employees and customers.

Use only models that meet the Underwriters Laboratories Standard UL 2034 safety standard and follow the manufacturer's installation guidelines.

CO detectors should not replace regular maintenance on appliances, heating equipment and venting systems.

Have a certified technician inspect your fuel-burning appliances annually.

Call immediately for service if you think there's a problem.

Call 800-222-1222 if you suspect CO poisoning. In an emergency, call 911 and get fresh air immediately.

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Make Time for Safety

Mark your calendars for Sunday, November 1, to set your clocks back to standard time.

It's also the perfect time to change the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors. Remember to replace your CO detectors as recommended by the manufacturer – generally about every five to seven years, depending on the model. Some models will beep when they need to be replaced; however, others remain silent. So please make sure to read the manufacturer's instructions before installing.

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See the other side for more CO safety information.