

# KENTUCKY HAZ ALERT

To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, employers should:

- Train supervisors and employees to recognize symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning
- Provide first aid training, including what to do if exposed to carbon monoxide
- Review carbon monoxide prevention tips with their employees

Employees should:

- Report unusual behavior
- Know how to treat co-workers for carbon monoxide poisoning
- Carry a carbon monoxide detector to mobile sites
- Recognize signs of carbon monoxide poisoning

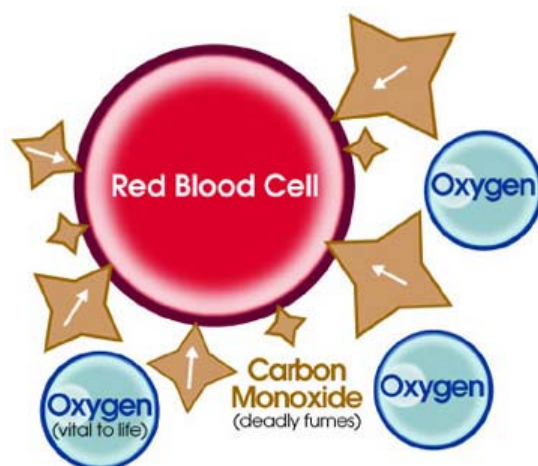
## WORKERS DIE FROM CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

In February 2009 and June 2011, one owner and one worker died as a direct result of carbon monoxide poisoning. Following are the case descriptions for the two work-related deaths:

**Case 1:** A 65-year-old male owner of a rental house died of carbon monoxide poisoning. The owner was working on his vacant rental house. The house did not have electricity as a result of a recent ice storm. The owner had placed a gasoline generator inside the house, running it to provide electricity. The owner, along with the running gasoline generator, were found in a small room. Firefighters determined that a high level of carbon monoxide was present. The interval between onset and death occurred in minutes.

**Case 2:** A 52-year-old male employee who worked for a heating

and cooling company died of carbon monoxide poisoning. The worker was monitoring a gas-fired air conditioning unit. When the employee did not return to the company, another employee was sent to look for him. The employee was found dead inside the house.



**Carbon Monoxide Blocks Oxygen From Getting to the Body, Which May Result in Death.**

**Carbon Monoxide is a Silent, Odorless Killer**

## TRAIN SUPERVISORS AND EMPLOYEES TO RECOGNIZE SYMPTOMS OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

Carbon monoxide is a toxic gas. You cannot see, smell or taste it. It does not appear as a smoke or a fire. The most common symptoms of CO poisoning are:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Chest pain
- Confusion

High levels of CO inhalation can cause loss of consciousness and death. Unless suspected, CO poisoning can be difficult to diagnose because the symptoms mimic other illnesses.

## FIRST AID FOR CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

If you are experiencing the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, **IMMEDIATELY** go outdoors into the fresh air. Have someone drive you to seek medical assistance. If you are very sick, call 911. If you find another employee sick or unconscious and suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, get him or her outside and seek medical help. Do not remain indoors or at the source of carbon monoxide to prevent yourself from becoming a victim of carbon monoxide poisoning.

## IMPORTANT CARBON MONOXIDE PREVENTION TIPS

Report any situation to your employer that might cause CO to accumulate. Be alert to ventilation problems—especially in enclosed areas where gases of burning fuels may be released. Report complaints of dizziness, drowsiness, or nausea promptly. Avoid overexertion if you suspect CO poisoning and leave the contaminated area. Tell your doctor that you may have been exposed to CO if you get sick. Avoid the use of gas-powered engines, such as those in powered washers as well as heaters and forklifts, while working in enclosed spaces. Use CO detectors as a warning to gas exposure, and not as a replacement for other safety measures.

## CARRY A CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR TO MOBILE SITES

A carbon monoxide detector should be considered standard equipment if working with fuel powered equipment indoors. It is equally important to have a carbon monoxide detector if fuel powered equipment is directly outside you enclosed structure. Detectors should also be used in outdoor structures which can trap carbon monoxide gas, such as tunnels, caves and mines.

### For more information, contact:

KY Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center (KIPRC)

333 Waller Ave., Suite 242

Lexington, KY 40504

1-800-204-3223 (toll-free)

<http://www.kiprc.uky.edu/face.html>

### References:

- (1) <http://www.cdc.gov/co/>
- (2) [chfs.ky.gov/preparedness](http://chfs.ky.gov/preparedness)
- (3) [http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_General\\_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf)
- (4) <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/coftsht.html>
- (5) <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/co-comp/>
- (6) [http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_Hurricane\\_Facts/carbon\\_monoxide.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/carbon_monoxide.pdf)



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