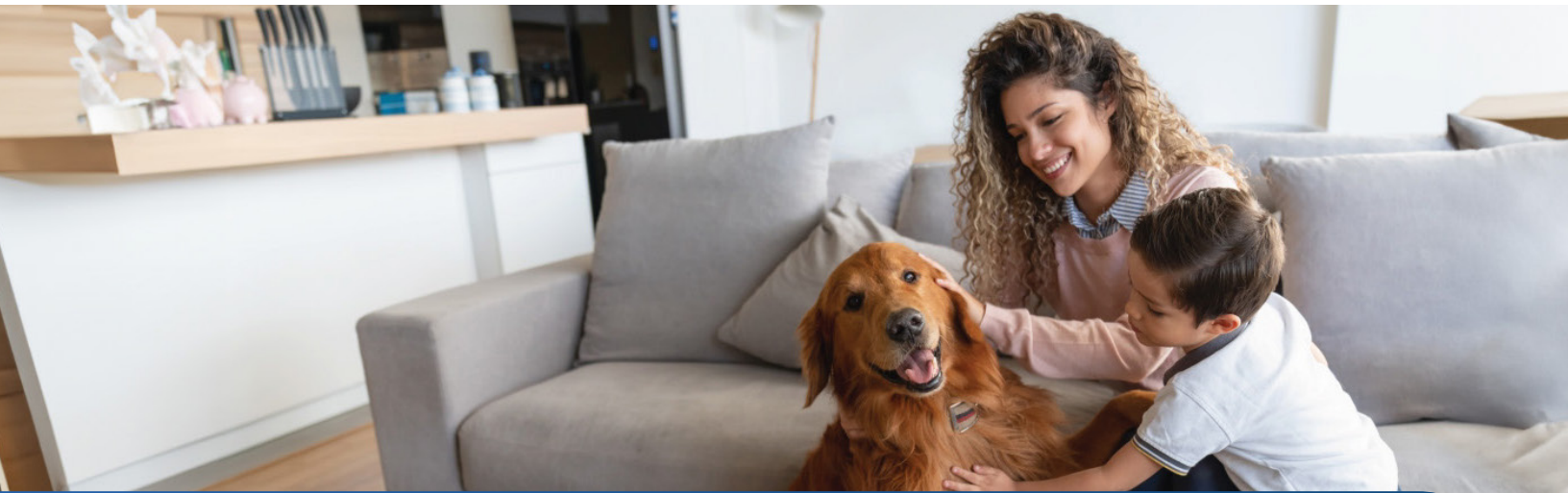




PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM CARBON MONOXIDE

Often called the silent killer, Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an odourless, tasteless, but extremely poisonous gas. CO is produced when common fuels, such as natural gas, propane, kerosene, fuel oil, wood, coal, and charcoal, do not burn completely.

What is CO poisoning?

When fuel is burned, an adequate air supply must be present to ensure the fuel burns completely, or excessive amounts of Carbon Monoxide (CO) will form.

When CO is inhaled, red blood cells become deprived of oxygen. Exposure to CO leads to unconsciousness, convulsions, brain damage, and ultimately, death.

Symptoms of CO poisoning:

- Dizziness
- Burning eyes
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Loss of muscle control
- Fatigue
- Confusion

Signs there may be CO in your home:

- Stuffy air;
- Sudden formation of excessive moisture on windows and walls;
- Soot build-up around appliances and vents;
- A yellow flame in a natural gas appliance instead of blue;
- Fumes that may smell like vehicle exhaust (CO is odourless but may be accompanied by other exhaust-like fumes), and;
- Everyone in the home becomes ill with flu like symptoms at the same time.



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Common sources of CO in your home

- Corroded, disconnected, or plugged chimneys on fuel-burning appliances.
- Barbecuing indoors.
- Lack of service to gas appliances.
- An idling vehicle in an attached garage.
- Attached garage passageway door to your home is left ajar.
- Heated garages or shops with unvented or improperly vented equipment.
- Defective furnace heat exchanger.
- Depressurization (i.e., a change in your home's air pressure when inside air is exhausted faster than outside fresh air can come in).

Tips to keep your home safe

- Have your gas appliances maintained and inspected annually by a licensed gas contractor.
- Ensure your gas appliances have an adequate air supply to support burning of gas. Do not block air supply openings.
- Periodically clean the dust and lint off your CO detectors.
- Make sure the furnace and water heater vent pipes are in good condition and securely fastened.
- Keep furnace panels and grills in place and ensure the fan compartment door is closed.
- Keep flue vents and chimneys clear of debris and other blockages, including frost and snow.
- Never leave your vehicle idling in the garage, even if the door is open. Start lawnmowers and snowblowers outside.
- Open a window when using a wood-burning fireplace or woodstove.
- Do not operate unvented appliances (i.e., barbecue or portable propane heater) in your home or garage.
- Never operate a gasoline generator in your house or garage.

- Consult a qualified gas contractor when upgrading your home. Increasing the energy efficiency of your home or adding exhaust fans may affect the operation of your gas appliance.

What to do if your CO alarm goes off

If your CO detector alarm goes off, and someone is experiencing symptoms:

- Everyone must leave the home immediately.
- Call 911 or your local fire department as soon as you are in a safe location.
- Those with symptoms should seek medical attention.
- Do not re-enter your home until the CO level has been checked, it has been deemed safe to re-enter, and the source has been found and eliminated.

If no one is suffering from CO symptoms take immediate steps to determine the reason for the alarm:

- Shut off any gas appliances and open the doors and windows to ventilate your home.
- If your alarm stops while your home ventilates, you may have low levels of CO in your home. Call a qualified gas contractor to check your gas appliances as soon as possible.
- If the alarm continues to sound with your home ventilated, your detector may be at the end of its life cycle, or the batteries may need to be replaced.

Your detector may have reacted to:

- Vehicle exhaust entering your home
- Burning candles or oil lamps
- Cigarette smoke
- Prolonged humidity, if installed near a bathroom or an open window when it is humid outside
- Chemicals and cleaning products
- Lint, dust, or hair built up on sensors