

Occupational Carbon Monoxide Poisoning



IMPROPER HEATING AND VENTILATION MAY CAUSE A BUILD UP OF CARBON MONOXIDE AND OTHER TOXIC AIR CONTAMINANTS



Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas that can cause permanent damage to parts of your body that require a lot of oxygen, such as the heart and brain. CO poisoning may result in neurological damage, illness, coma, or death. Symptoms of CO exposure include headaches, dizziness, drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, and tightness across the chest.

CO POISONING RISKS

Using gasoline, propane, or natural gas equipment (such as generators, heaters, forklifts, and scissor lifts) indoors or in partially enclosed spaces.

Using poorly ventilated stoves, portable heaters, or generators that burn fuel and are not designed for indoor use.

Operating an improperly installed or malfunctioning heating system.

Allowing vehicles to idle near fresh air sources such as doors, windows, and ventilation system air intakes.

CO POISONING PREVENTION TIPS

Move people with symptoms to fresh air and immediately get them medical treatment.

Heat and ventilate with properly installed and maintained equipment.

Ensure that all fuel-powered equipment is in a safe operating condition.

Do not use gasoline-powered equipment and tools indoors or in partially enclosed spaces.

Ensure that snow and ice do not block exhaust vents and pipes on buildings and vehicles.

Educate workers about CO sources and conditions that may result in poisoning.

Encourage employees to safely heat and ventilate their homes and to install CO detectors.

CO POISONING RESOURCES

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Providence Area Office
(401) 528-4669, www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf

Rhode Island Department of Health
(401) 222-5960, www.health.ri.gov/healthrisks/poisoning/carbonmonoxide

Environmental Protection Agency, www.epa.gov/air/urbanair/co



The Right Safe Coalition and the Rhode Island Department of Health have prepared this fact sheet for informational purposes only. It is not a comprehensive statement of all possible work-related CO hazards.