

Carbon Monoxide

Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels burn incompletely. In the home, heating equipment that burns fuel is a potential source of carbon monoxide, with November, December and January representing peak months for (non-fire) carbon monoxide incidents.

To reduce the risk of carbon monoxide and other home heating hazards this winter, the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) have teamed up to promote their joint fire safety campaign, “Put a Freeze on Winter Fires,” and urge everyone to take the following precautions to prevent carbon monoxide in their homes:

- Make sure all fuel-burning equipment is vented to the outside. During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys inspected and cleaned annually by a qualified professional.
- If you use a generator, make sure it's used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vent.
- Install CO alarms in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home and in other locations where required by applicable laws, codes or standards.
- If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move everyone in your home to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door and call for help. Stay there until emergency personnel arrive to assist you.

For more heating fire safety advice from NFPA and USFA’s “Put a Freeze on Winter” campaign, visit www.nfpa.org/winter.

Here are additional links with other home safety articles that you might want to share with your homeowners' association and neighbors:

Carbon Monoxide Fact Sheets:

<http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-consumers/fire-and-safety-equipment/carbon-monoxide>

<http://www.nfpa.org/~media/Files/Safety%20information/Safety%20tip%20sheets/cosafety.pdf>

Cooking Safety:

<http://www.nfpa.org/~media/Files/Safety%20information/Safety%20tip%20sheets/cookingsafety.pdf>

Heating Fact Sheet:

http://www.nfpa.org/~media/Files/Safety%20information/Public%20educators/Community%20tool%20kits/heating%20kit/Heating_Fast_Facts.pdf

Smoke Alarms:

<http://www.nfpa.org/~media/Files/Safety%20information/Safety%20tip%20sheets/SmokeAlarms.pdf>

Heating Safety:

http://www.nfpa.org/~media/Files/Safety%20information/Safety%20tip%20sheets/heating_safety.pdf

Fire Safety in Manufactured Homes:

<http://local1950.com/items/ManufacturedHomesSafetyTips.pdf>