

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Understanding the Risks



What Is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless, and toxic gas. CO is produced whenever any fuel such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood, or charcoal is burned. If appliances that

burn fuel are maintained and used properly, the amount of CO produced is usually not hazardous. However, if appliances are not working properly or are used incorrectly, dangerous levels of CO can result.

Who Is at Risk?

Everyone is at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning. Medical experts believe that unborn babies, small children, senior citizens, and people with heart or lung conditions have a greater risk.

What Are the Symptoms?

Because it is impossible to see, taste, or smell the toxic fumes, CO can kill you before you are aware it is in your home. At lower levels of exposure, CO causes mild effects that are often mistaken for the flu. These symptoms include headaches, dizziness, disorientation, nausea, and fatigue. The effects of CO exposure can vary greatly from person to person depending on age, overall health, and the concentration and length of exposure.

Preventative Measures

Do:

- Have a qualified professional check all fuel-burning appliances, furnaces, venting, and chimney systems at least once a year.
- Operate all fuel-burning equipment and appliances in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and safety recommendations.
- Install at least one CO detector in the sleeping areas of your home. Purchase a model that has been tested and certified by an independent organization, such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL). Check the unit periodically to ensure that it is functioning correctly.

Do Not:

- Use a stove or range, to help heat your home.
- Operate fuel-fired equipment such as barbecue grills, generators, and small engines inside enclosed spaces, such as your home or garage.
- Let your automobile idle inside your garage.

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It is filled with great information on ways to lower your energy use and save money. In addition to timely and relevant articles—the e-communication comes complete with a searchable energy e-Library; a set of energy

Quick-Tips; and HVAC, home energy use, and carbon-footprint calculators—all geared toward helping you better manage your energy.

The best part of Okaloosa Gas, "The Information Pipeline" is that it is proactively delivered to your email inbox. We know everyone is looking for ways to save a few dollars and minimize their impact on the environment—Okaloosa Gas, The Information Pipeline is part of the answer! Sign up today at: okaloosagas.com

Florida Appliance Rebates

The State of Florida implemented a mail-in rebate program to help residents replace older, inefficient appliances with ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances. The program is April 16 through April 25, 2010. Eligible products include:

- Refrigerators
- Freezers
- Clothes washers
- Dishwashers
- Room air conditioners
- Gas tankless water heaters

Florida will offer residents a 20% rebate off the price of a new ENERGY STAR qualified appliance. Consumers may also receive an additional rebate with proof of having recycled the old appliance.

To learn more, click on the site below:

[http://www.energysavers.gov/financial/rebates/
state_FL.cfm](http://www.energysavers.gov/financial/rebates/state_FL.cfm)

The Information Pipeline

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Florida Appliance Rebates



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Share the Warmth

“Share the Warmth” provides energy assistance to residents that need assistance with their energy bills, repairs to heating and air conditioning equipment and other energy related needs. The elderly, the disabled, the sick and others who are experiencing financial difficulties will benefit from this program.

How does “Share the Warmth” work?

Residents that need to apply for Share the Warmth assistance may do so at The Salvation Army office in their county. Eligibility requirements are set by The Salvation Army.

“Share the Warmth” is administered by The Salvation Army and is funded by Okaloosa Gas customers who donate through their natural gas bills. All contributions are forwarded to The Salvation Army.

How can I Contribute to “Share the Warmth”?

To participate, you can pledge to contribute \$1, \$2, \$5, or any other whole dollar amount you choose each month. The amount you select will be automatically added to your utility bill each month. To enroll in “Share the Warmth”, go to: okaloosagas.com, you will be glad you did.

Do you Need a New Heating System?



This time of year, most homeowners are beginning to look toward spring, but now might be a good time to evaluate your heating system. If high energy bills and cold spots in your home have been plaguing you all winter, then you might consider a heating system upgrade. After all, a new unit might be far more efficient than the old system and should work better, thus improving home comfort. A new heating system is a significant investment, however, and should be carefully considered.

Poor Heating System Performance. What Are the Symptoms?

Certain telltale signs indicate that it is time to replace your heating equipment or improve the efficiency of your overall system. Contact a heating system professional if any of these conditions apply to your system:

- Some rooms in your home are not comfortable.
- Your equipment needs frequent repairs.
- Energy bills are going up.
- Your home has humidity problems.
- Your home has excessive dust.
- Your heating system is noisy.
- Your heating system is older than 15 years old.

For Home Heating, Make Natural Gas your Choice

The choice is easy when you consider that clean burning natural gas is the most cost-effective, efficient, and environmentally friendly fuel source available. After all, there is a reason while nearly 60 million U.S. homes use natural gas as their heating fuel. When selecting equipment, consumers are often confused by efficiency ratings where electric models may have higher ratings than those of gas. Seems like an electric heating system would be a more efficient use of resources, right? Well, not when you consider the *total fuel cycle*, which is the overall efficiency in delivering energy from its source to the ultimate consumer. In this case, natural gas is the clear winner—90% versus 31% for electricity—according to data from the U.S. Department of Energy. In addition, the generation of electricity produces greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, at more than three times the rate of natural gas. It is clear that natural gas is the responsible choice in helping to lower emissions and reduce your environmental impact.

When purchasing a natural gas furnace, make sure and select a model that is ENERGY STAR qualified. ENERGY STAR products are up to 15% more efficient than standard models. Many high-efficiency natural gas furnace products are eligible for federal tax credits that cover up to 30% of installation costs. **Call today to see how heating your home with natural gas will save you money: Call 729-4700.**

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