

## QUICK FACTS ON CO

**WHAT IS IT:** A colourless, odourless and tasteless gas.

**SIGNS:** Stuffy air, water vapour, backdraft and soot from a fireplace.

**SYMPTOMS:** Headaches, weakness, nausea, vomiting and loss of muscle control. They can be mistaken for flu symptoms.

**EFFECTS:** If inhaled, carbon monoxide deprives the blood of oxygen. Prolonged exposure can lead to unconsciousness, brain damage or death.

**CAUSES:** Blocked or dirty vents, flues, chimneys and furnaces, as well as improper ventilation of burning fireplaces or woodstoves.

**DEATHS:** Approximately 200 per year.

**PREVENTION:** Annual inspection and cleaning of:

- Furnaces
- chimneys
- fireplaces
- other fuel-burning equipment such as gas dryers

### Safety tips on how to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning

**INSTALL** at least one carbon monoxide detector in your home.

**ENSURE** a wood or coal-burning stove is properly installed and vented.

**DON'T** operate a gasoline-powered engine, kerosene stove or charcoal grill in a closed space.

**BARBECUE** grills should never be operated indoors.

**CHECK** clothes dryer vents that open outside the house for lint.

**CHECK** forced air fans for proper ventilation.

***If you suspect carbon monoxide in your home, get out immediately and call the fire department.***



**Fire Prevention Canada**



*Working with the private and public sectors to achieve fire safety through education.*