



Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2008

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The Silent Killer

It's cold! There is no denying it. Most people's first instinct is to crank up the heat and hunker down indoors until the weather gets a little nicer. With energy costs soaring, however, some struggle to keep their houses at a comfortable temperature. This time of year we begin to see citizens turning to alternative sources for heat including, generators, fireplaces, grills and even the oven. With an increase in these heating sources we see an increase in burns, fires and Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning.

Carbon Monoxide is an invisible, odorless gas that is produced when fuels are burned (i.e. wood, gas, oil, coal etc.). CO is often referred to as the "silent killer" as it can be difficult to detect and is a deadly poison that enters your body through your breathing. Anyone can be poisoned by CO, but alternative heating sources can raise a person's risk of CO exposure, and therefore should be avoided. It is very important for every home to have at least one CO alarm outside the sleeping areas.

CO alarms can be battery powered, plugged in to an outlet or hard wired into a homes electrical system. It is important to remember that CO alarms are not substitutes for smoke alarms. All houses should have both. To learn more about CO and how to protect your family see the fact sheet on page 2 and visit:
www.homesafetycouncil.org
www.nfpa.org

Burden of Unintentional CO Poisonings in Maryland, 2006

Emergency Department Visits	279
Hospital Discharges	44
Deaths	7

Partnership Updates and Upcoming Events

NOMINATIONS DUE

Partnership Awards

The Partnership would like to recognize businesses, non-profits, civic and trade organizations that contribute to injury prevention efforts throughout the state of Maryland. In order to do this, we are asking you, our members, to nominate organizations for the first annual Partnership awards.

More information along with nomination forms can be found on the Partnership website and are due on 2/21/2008

Awards will be presented at a luncheon that will correspond with the next quarterly meeting the week of May 5-9th. Please check the website for more details about this event.

Legislative Session 2008

You may not be able to lobby but there is a role for everyone in advocating for injury and violence prevention in Maryland!

Remember to send any related legislation to the Partnership so we can help our members stay on top of bills that may effect the work we do.



Stay Safe From Carbon Monoxide

What do I need to know about CO?

CO is an invisible, odorless gas that is produced by burning

- Wood
- Oil
- Methane
- Gasoline
- Propane
- Coal
- Charcoal
- Natural gas
- Other Common Fuels
- CO is also produced by automobiles and other gasoline or diesel engines



High levels of CO can cause death within just a few minutes

CO poisoning can be confused with the flu, food poisoning, or other illness.

Symptoms of CO poisoning include: **Headache** **Nausea**
Dizziness **Light-headedness**
Shortness of breath



If you think there is CO in your home or a CO alarm sounds get to fresh air fast and call 911!

How can I protect myself and my family?

Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home!

- Have all fuel-burning appliances (furnaces, fireplace, stoves, space heaters, dryers, and water heaters) professionally installed and maintained.
- If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it.
- Do not run a vehicle, generator, or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open.
- Never use an oven or grill to heat your home.
- Make sure everyone knows the difference between the sound of the smoke alarm and the sound of the CO alarm.

If you need help heating your home call the Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs at: 41-800-352-1446 or visit <http://www.dhr.state.md.us/meap/>

**For more information about CO poisoning visit
www.nfpa.org and www.homesafetycouncil.org**