



*****For Immediate Release*****

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Government and Media Relations

State Fire Marshal's Office
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Carbon Monoxide Safety

Olympia – The State Fire Marshal's Office would like to remind residents of the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO), a gas you cannot see, taste, or smell, and is often called “the invisible killer.”

CO is created when natural gas, propane, gasoline, and firewood fail to burn completely. Symptoms of CO exposure include headache, nausea, and drowsiness. With sufficient exposure, CO poisoning can be fatal.

To reduce the risk of CO exposure:

- Have fuel-burning heating equipment such as fireplaces, furnaces, water heaters, wood stoves, pellet stoves, and their chimneys inspected and cleaned by a professional every year.
- Be sure that exhaust from fuel-burning equipment vents fully and properly to the outside. Keep any exterior venting clear and unblocked by snow, lint, vegetation, or other debris.
- Never run a vehicle, generator, or gas grill in a garage, even if garage doors are open.

To protect your family if CO enters your home:

- Install CO alarms in the immediate vicinity of each sleeping room, such as the hallway outside bedrooms and on every level of the home. Additionally, CO alarms should be installed in sleeping rooms that have a fuel burning appliance.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month. The sensors in CO alarms have a limited lifespan. Replace the CO alarm if the unit fails to respond to testing or when the end-of-life signal sounds.

The State Fire Marshal's Office is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington States firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.

- If the CO alarm sounds unexpectedly, immediately move everyone to a fresh air location outdoors and call 911. Do not go back inside until emergency personnel declare that it is safe to re-enter your home.

For more information, contact the State Fire Marshal's Office at (360) 596-3929.

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