



For Immediate Release
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THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES WARNING ABOUT CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

Keep portable generators outdoors and at least 20-25 feet away from the house. Do not use charcoal grills or other fuel powered equipment indoors.

Hartford – With high winds today, widespread power outages are predicted. The Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH) warns residents about the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) and urges them to take steps to prevent deadly CO poisoning. When power goes out, keep your portable generator outside when using it and at least 20 feet away from the house. Never use them inside of the house, on a porch, in a garage, basement, or shed. **Even if garage doors are open, CO gas can build up to deadly levels within minutes.**

Charcoal grills, camping stoves, kerosene lamps and heaters, and other equipment that uses fuel should never be used indoors. Opening windows does not provide enough ventilation to be protective.

CO is an invisible, odorless gas that can be fatal. If you breathe in a lot of CO gas, it can make you pass out or kill you. People who are sleeping or drunk can die from CO poisoning before they have symptoms. CO gas can be dangerous even before the alarm sounds. **If household members suddenly begin feeling symptoms like the flu- headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion, get out of the house, then call 911.**

DPH offers the following safety tips to prevent CO poisoning:

- Get out of the house and seek medical help immediately if you or a family member has unexplained/sudden onset of symptoms of CO poisoning. Symptoms include headache, fatigue, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, and loss of consciousness.
- Call 911 from a cell phone or neighbor's home and the Connecticut Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.
- **Never use a portable generator indoors or in the garage or shed.**

Even if the garage or shed doors are open, CO gas can still build up to dangerous levels within minutes!

- **Place portable generators at least 20-25 feet away from the house.**

There have been instances where exhaust containing CO gas has been blown back into the house and poisoned occupants when outdoor portable generators were close to the house.

- Use gasoline-powered equipment outside and away from doors, windows or air intake vents.
- Use grilling apparatus such as charcoal or gas grills outdoors only.
- Opening windows and doors, and operating fans is NOT sufficient to prevent buildup of CO in a home.
- Make sure inlets and outlets for your furnace are free of leaves, debris, and snow. Some furnaces have exhaust vents that could become blocked, causing ventilation problems. Know what type of exhaust system your furnace has and where the exhaust inlets and outlets are located for your home.

DPH developed a video, Carbon Monoxide: The Silent Killer, to help raise awareness of the dangers of CO and how to prevent poisoning. It is available online in English and Spanish by clicking on the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pe-8QcFJ1ME>.

More information on Carbon Monoxide can also be found on the DPH website by clicking [here](#).