

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

John J. Barthelmes, Commissioner



Division of Fire Safety
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

J. William Degnan, State Fire Marshal

Office: NH Incident Management Center, 110 Smokey Bear Blvd., Concord, NH

Mailing Address: 33 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03305

603-223-4289, FAX 603-223-4294

TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964 ARSON HOTLINE 1-800-400-3526

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:

Mary L. MacCaffrie
Public Education Administrator

or

State Fire Marshal J. William Degnan
N.H. State Fire Marshal's Office

Eliminating the Risk of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning in Your Home

At the request of State Fire Marshal J. William Degnan and The Carbon Monoxide Work Group, New Hampshire Governor Maggie Hassan signed a proclamation to declare November as Carbon Monoxide Awareness month. Marshal Degnan and the New Hampshire Association of Fire Chiefs' president and New London Fire Chief Jason Lyon want to remind residents about the dangers of carbon monoxide levels in your homes. "Carbon monoxide (CO) is produced whenever any fuel such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood, or charcoal is burned. As the winter months come upon us, our use of fuel for heating increases thereby, increasing the potential for elevated levels of carbon monoxide." says Marshal Degnan.

Nationwide, hundreds of people die accidentally every year from CO poisoning caused by malfunctioning or improperly used fuel-burning furnaces or appliances. Chief Lyon advises, "Unvented space heaters should never be used as a primary source of heat. Should your family need the extra warmth and use an unvented space heater, be sure to install a carbon monoxide detector."

Fire departments have responded to over 450 New Hampshire households for CO concerns already this year. Infants, elderly people, unborn babies, and people with anemia or with a history of heart or respiratory disease can be especially susceptible. Symptoms of CO poisoning may include headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness, and confusion. Do not ignore symptoms, particularly if more than one person is feeling them. Marshal Degnan warns, "**If you suspect CO poisoning, get outside to fresh air immediately, and then call 911.**"

Techniques to reduce the risk of CO poisoning in your home when using fuel-burning devices include:

- Have a trained professional inspect, clean, and tune-up central heating system (furnaces, flues, and chimneys) annually. Repair any leaks promptly.
- Install CO alarm(s) with battery backup outside of sleeping areas.
- Test your CO alarm(s) frequently and replace dead batteries.
- Do not use a gas oven to heat your home, even for a short time.
- Keep gas appliances properly adjusted.
- **Do not use any gasoline-powered engines, such as portable generators, in enclosed spaces, including your garage and locate them at least 10 feet from your house with the exhaust facing away from the building.**
- Do not idle your vehicle inside a garage.
- Do not sleep in any room with an unvented gas or kerosene space heater.
- Make certain that doors on all wood stoves fit tightly.

For more information visit the websites www.nh.gov/co , www.nfpa.org , or www.firesafety.gov or contact us at FMO@dos.nh.gov