



Sanford Fire Department

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Carbon Monoxide Warning

The Sanford Fire Department is issuing a warning to all Sanford residents on the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO).

CO is a colorless, odorless gas. Because you can't see, taste, or smell it, CO can kill you before you know it's there. Recent studies conducted by Iowa State University indicate that cold car engines running in an attached garage, even for a short period of time (as little as one to two minutes) can raise CO to dangerous levels in a home. These extremely high levels of CO have the potential to harm occupants.

CO is a byproduct of incomplete combustion of fossil fuels such as natural gas, oil, wood or coal. Some common causes of carbon monoxide poisoning include:

- malfunctioning appliances
- furnaces
- stoves
- ovens
- water heaters
- blocked chimney flues
- fuel burning cooking appliances
- charcoal grills
- motor vehicles.

Symptoms may include flu-like symptoms such as:

- headaches
- nausea
- fatigue and tiredness
- dizziness
- confusion
- breathing difficulties.

Young and old are particularly at risk, but everyone is at risk.

The Sanford Fire Department recommends the following steps to reduce the chances of carbon monoxide poisoning:

- Purchase and install CO alarms in your home!
- Place a CO alarm on each level of your home and in areas near appliances that are potential sources of CO.
- Have a qualified professional check all fuel burning appliances, furnaces, venting and chimney systems at least once a year or as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Never leave a motor vehicle running in an attached garage or carport where CO may enter your home.

Everyone is at risk for CO poisoning. The Sanford Fire Department encourages every resident to take steps to protect themselves from this "silent killer".