

PROPER RESPONSE TO CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM SIGNAL

WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a highly toxic, invisible, odorless, and tasteless gas.

HOW DOES CO POISON PEOPLE?

The human body depends on oxygen for the burning of fuel (food) to provide us with the energy that allows our cells to live and function. Oxygen makes up approximately 21% of the atmosphere and enters our lungs when we breathe. In our lungs, the oxygen combines with the hemoglobin in the blood (oxyhemoglobin) and is carried in the blood stream throughout the body where it releases oxygen to the cells.

Carbon monoxide is dangerous because it bonds more tightly to the hemoglobin (COHb, carboxyhemoglobin) than oxygen does. When CO combines with hemoglobin, the hemoglobin's ability to combine with oxygen is lost. As the COHb concentration rises, people become nauseous, unconscious and eventually die. (See below.)

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING?

Many people often confuse carbon monoxide poisoning with the flu; the initial symptoms being very similar. Different concentrations of CO, over various lengths of time, cause different symptoms.

Many cases of carbon monoxide poisoning indicate that although the victims were aware that they were not feeling well, they were too disoriented to save themselves by either calling for assistance or exiting the building. Due to their size, small children and pets are generally the first to be affected.

The following are symptoms related to carbon monoxide poisoning. Discuss them with all members of the household:

MILD EXPOSURE	Headaches, running nose, sore eyes, often described as "flu-like" symptoms
MEDIUM EXPOSURE	Dizziness, drowsiness, vomiting
EXTREME EXPOSURE	Unconsciousness, brain damage, death

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE ALARM SIGNAL SOUNDS

If the Red LED flashes and the alarm sounds four short beeps every six seconds, do the following:

- 1) Press the reset/mute button to temporarily silence the alarm;
- 2) Immediately move to fresh air outdoors or by an open door/window. Check that all persons are accounted for. Do not re-enter the premises or move away from the open door/window until the emergency service responders have arrived, the premises has been aired out, and your alarm returns to its normal condition (Green LED blinks, no audible alarm signal).
- 3) If your alarm reactivates within a 24 hour period after following the previous steps, then repeat steps 1-2 and immediately call a qualified appliance technician if he has not already been contacted. The technician should investigate for sources of CO from fuel burning equipment not inspected by the technician and consult the manufacturer's instructions, or contact the manufacturer directly to receive more information about CO safety and the equipment. Also, be sure that motor vehicles are not, and have not been operating in an attached garage or adjacent to the residence.

WHAT TO DO IF DETECTOR MALFUNCTIONS

If the Red LED flashes and alarm sounds two short beeps every minute, the detector is malfunctioning. Please review warranty for instructions and call manufacturer to receive new replacement unit.