

With the temperatures dipping below freezing and winter gracing us with her presence (finally) it is time to take a look at a deadly occurrence that strikes without warning, Carbon Monoxide poisoning. The “silent” killer as it is often referred, Carbon Monoxide poisoning is a subject that people know very little about. Not only can it kill you, it can cause permanent neurological damage in the longer term. In the short term, it can make you feel ill and inhibit your life potential. Carbon monoxide is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in America.

Carbon Monoxide is produced by the incomplete combustion of the fossil fuels - gas, oil, coal and wood used in boilers, engines, oil burners, gas fires, water heaters, solid fuel appliances and open fires. The most important thing to remember is that Carbon Monoxide is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, toxic gas.

Signs and symptoms of CO poisoning include but are not limited to the following:

- Dull Headache (most common)
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Chest pain
- Confusion /Altered Mental Status

Here are a few simple ways to protect against CO poisoning. Check the flame color that your appliances, if it is orange it needs to be checked. Make sure there is adequate ventilation with all home and business appliances. Check your flue and make sure it is not blocked and free from obstructions. Do you have an unexplained illness? If so, you need to remove yourself from the environment and call 911. It is better to be safe than a statistic. The most important thing you and your family can do to prevent CO poisoning is to pick up a CO detector at your local hardware store. It can save your life!