

Fall Back With Carbon Monoxide Awareness

As temperatures drop and Daylight Savings Time comes to an end on November 5th, the Iowa Public Health Tracking program wants to bring awareness to the dangers of carbon monoxide by providing information, data, and resources to remind Iowans to take action to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. This weekend, as the clocks get turned back, it's important to remind Iowans to check their home devices that protect their families from carbon monoxide poisoning to ensure that they are in good working order.

In Iowa, an average of 35 deaths and 300 emergency department visits occur each year from carbon monoxide poisoning. These trips to the ER for carbon monoxide poisoning are preventable when people are prepared. At high levels, carbon monoxide can cause death within minutes. Symptoms of overexposure to carbon monoxide include headaches, fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, nausea, and confusion.

The following safety tips are important to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:

- **Make sure you have working carbon monoxide detectors.** Install carbon monoxide detectors in your home near every sleeping area and change the batteries every six months. Detectors can be purchased at most hardware stores.
- **Have your furnace or wood-burning stove inspected annually.** Hire a professional to make sure it is functionally sound and vents properly outside the home.
- **Never run a gasoline or propane heater or a grill (gas or charcoal) inside your home or in an unventilated garage.** Any heating system that burns fuel produces carbon monoxide. Use a battery-powered detector where you have fuel burning devices but no electric outlets, such as in tents, cabins, RVs, and boats with enclosed cabins.
- **Never run a car in an enclosed space.** If a vehicle is running, you must have a door open to the outside.
- **Generators should be run a safe distance from the home.** Never run a generator in the home or garage, or right next to windows or doors.

Anyone that suspects they are experiencing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, or their detector sounds an alarm, they should head outside immediately for fresh air and call 911.

For more information, data, and resources about carbon monoxide, visit:

<https://pht.idph.state.ia.us/Health/CarbonMonoxidePoisoning/Pages/Prevention.aspx>

Iowa Public Health Tracking - Keeping Track, Promoting Health

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