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Fact Sheet

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control • www.scdhec.gov

Combustion Appliances: Got to Vent It

How can some of my appliances create a health hazard in my home?

Fuel-burning appliances use gas, oil, or wood to produce heat. Examples of these appliances are space heaters, ranges, ovens, stoves, furnaces, fireplaces, water heaters, and clothes dryers. You can't see, taste, or even smell carbon monoxide. If they are not working right, they can produce high levels of carbon monoxide and can cause health effects or even death.

What can I do to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning?

1. Make sure that what keeps you warm can't harm you. Never sleep in un-vented rooms with fuel-burning appliances that are not vented.
2. Have all fuel-burning appliances checked at least once a year by a professional.
3. Install carbon monoxide alarms in the bedrooms. Make sure the alarms are located near the floor.
4. Follow all instructions on how to install, use, and keep up your detector.
5. Never use barbecues or grills in the garage.
6. Let the drivers in your house know that running cars or lawnmowers in the garage is dangerous.
7. Make sure that car and truck tail pipes are not clogged with debris.

What do I do if I have been exposed to carbon monoxide?

If you believe you are being exposed to carbon monoxide, get fresh air immediately. Open windows and doors for more ventilation. Turn off any combustion appliances, and leave the house.

For more information visit:

S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control
http://www.scdhec.gov/administration/library/CR-008067.pdf

Environmental Protection Agency
http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/coftsht.html

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