

Stay Safe and Save Lives With a Carbon Monoxide Detector

Carbon monoxide is a gas that is produced whenever any fuel is burned. Though it is invisible and odorless, it can be deadly.

That's why it's so important to have a carbon monoxide detector in your home. This guide will provide you with information on how these devices work, how to get one installed, and the importance of properly maintaining yours.

How Carbon Monoxide Is Produced

Fuels such as natural gas, propane, gasoline, and oil all produce carbon monoxide when they are burned. As a result, appliances in your home that use these fuels, such as furnaces, water heaters, fireplaces, and stoves, can produce carbon monoxide gas.

Normally, these appliances are vented to the outside and pose little risk. However, if they are not working properly or are improperly installed, they can release carbon monoxide into your home.

For example, a blocked chimney can cause carbon monoxide to build up inside your home. Something as simple as a cracked pipe or loose connection can also lead to a carbon monoxide leak. When this happens, the gas can quickly spread throughout your home, building up to dangerous levels and putting everyone in your home at risk.

The Dangers of Carbon Monoxide

When carbon monoxide levels in the air are high, it can be deadly. The gas prevents oxygen from reaching your cells and tissues, and at high levels, it can cause death.

Some demographics of people are more susceptible to the effects of carbon monoxide than others. Infants, the elderly, and people with chronic medical conditions like heart disease, respiratory disease, and anemia are at a higher risk for carbon monoxide poisoning. However, this simply means that death or serious illness can happen more quickly for these people. The reality is that anyone can be affected by carbon monoxide poisoning.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headache, dizziness, nausea, shortness of breath, and confusion. If you suddenly experience any of these symptoms, it's critical that you move everyone in your household outdoors immediately and call 911.

If you are concerned about the risk of a future carbon monoxide leak, don't let the possibility of symptoms showing up lull you into a false sense of security. The gas can also cause sudden death without any warning signs. In other cases, by the time these symptoms occur, the carbon

monoxide level in your home may be dangerously high, and you may have already sustained long-term damage to your brain or other organs.

The Importance of Carbon Monoxide Detectors

One of the biggest reasons that carbon monoxide exposure can be so dangerous is that it's hard to detect without the right tools. The gas has no odor, meaning you can't detect it by smell. And the cause of a leak might not be immediately obvious either. It's also easy to brush off the initial symptoms of exposure as something else, such as the flu or just a bad night's sleep.

That's where a carbon monoxide detector comes in. Here's how they work: Carbon monoxide detectors have a small, coin-sized sensor that monitors the air for carbon monoxide. If the level of gas in the air reaches a certain threshold, an alarm will sound.

This sound will be easy to discern from your smoke detector, which has a different alarm. When you hear the alarm, you'll know that there might be carbon monoxide in your home, and you can take steps to get everyone to safety.

How Are Carbon Monoxide Detectors Installed?

It's important to have at least one carbon monoxide detector in your home, and it's best to place them within earshot of all sleeping areas. This way, if there is a carbon monoxide leak in the middle of the night, you'll be more likely to hear the alarm and take action. Additionally, if you have a multi-level home, you should have a detector on each floor.

Most carbon monoxide detectors can be plugged into a standard outlet or mounted on the wall. Some types of detectors need to be hard-wired into your home's electrical system.

It's noteworthy to mention that carbon monoxide leaks can be more likely during a power outage, especially during the winter. This is because homeowners may turn to alternative sources of heat and power, such as fireplaces and generators, which can release carbon monoxide into the home. If you live in an area that's prone to blackouts, consider investing in a carbon monoxide detector that has a battery backup. This way, even if the power goes out, your detector will still be able to do its job.

If you're not sure which type of detector to get or how to install it, your best bet is to consult with a professional. They can help you choose the right device and make sure it's properly installed. Doing so could end up saving your life.

Maintaining Your Carbon Monoxide Detector

Proactive effort shouldn't end when you get your carbon monoxide detector installed. You'll also need to take steps to ensure that it stays in good working condition.

Most detectors have a lifespan of around seven years. After this point, they may become less effective at detecting carbon monoxide. The National Fire Protection Association recommends replacing your detector every seven to ten years. However, most models have a date listed on them, which can help you keep track of when it needs to be replaced. If your detector's expiration date has passed, don't take any chances – go ahead and get a new one.

You should also test your device regularly to make sure it's working properly. Most detectors have a test button that allows you to do this. Simply press the button, and the alarm should sound. If the alarm doesn't sound, or if it sounds weak, you will likely need to replace the detector. This should be done as soon as possible to ensure that your home is safe.

It's also a good idea to vacuum or dust around your detector on a regular basis. Debris can build up over time and cause the detector to malfunction. By keeping it clean, you can help extend its lifespan and ensure that it works properly when you need it.

Final Thoughts

Carbon monoxide is a gas that you can't see, smell, or taste, but it can quickly lead to serious health problems – or even death. By installing and maintaining a carbon monoxide detector, you are taking vital action to protect yourself, your family, and your home in the event of the unexpected.

At _____, we value the health and safety of the households we serve. And while we recommend that all homeowners have a carbon monoxide detector, protecting yourself against this invisible gas begins with investing in quality HVAC services.

Our team of experienced professionals in Temecula, Murrieta, and Orange can help you choose the right system for your home and ensure that it's properly installed and well-maintained. Whether you need a carbon monoxide detector installed or a new furnace to prevent leaks, we're here to help. We also provide plumbing, water heater, and air conditioning services, so you can count on our team for all your HVAC needs. Give us a call today for more information about how we can assist you.