



## Protect Yourself Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, toxic gas which interferes with the oxygen-carrying capacity of blood. CO is non-irritating and can overcome persons without warning. Many people die from CO poisoning, usually while using gasoline powered tools and generators in buildings or semi-enclosed spaces without adequate ventilation.

### Effects of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- Severe carbon monoxide poisoning causes neurological damage, illness, coma and death.

### Symptoms of CO exposure

- Headaches, dizziness and drowsiness.
- Nausea, vomiting, tightness across the chest.

### Some Sources of Exposure

- Portable generators/generators in buildings.
- Concrete cutting saws, compressors.
- Power trowels, floor buffers, space heaters.
- Welding, gasoline powered pumps.

### Preventing CO Exposure

- Never use a generator indoors or in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces such as garages, crawl spaces, and basements. Opening windows and doors in an enclosed space may prevent CO buildup.
- Make sure the generator has 3-4 feet of clear space on all sides and above it to ensure adequate ventilation.
- Do not use a generator outdoors if placed near doors, windows or vents which could allow CO to enter and build up in occupied spaces.
- When using space heaters and stoves ensure that they are in good working order to reduce CO buildup, and never use in enclosed spaces or indoors.
- Consider using tools powered by electricity or compressed air, if available.
- If you experience symptoms of CO poisoning get to fresh air right away and seek immediate medical attention.

For more complete information:

 **Occupational  
Safety and Health  
Administration**  
U.S. Department of Labor  
[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov) (800) 321-OSHA

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