

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide is a deadly gas which can be created during the combustion of organic compounds (fuel) with limited amounts of oxygen. Carbon monoxide is:

- Odorless
- Colorless
- Lighter than air
- Lighter than air
- Collects in pockets

Carbon monoxide is absorbed into the bloodstream 200 times faster than oxygen. A concentration of just one percent in the air you breathe can kill you in just five minutes. Death is caused by suffocation, due to lack of oxygen.

Winter is the time of year during which work areas can become very uncomfortable. More attention is given to heat and comfort than to the possible presence of poisonous gas. Heating devices or combustion engines inside buildings *must* be vented, or adequate amounts of fresh air must be supplied.

Since carbon monoxide is odorless and colorless, you will not know that you are being suffocated. Carbon monoxide is detected *only* by special instruments. If there is carbon monoxide in the air you are breathing, you *may* experience the following warning symptoms – but do not bet your life on it.

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Yawning
- Nausea
- Fainting
- Fast heart rate
- Ringing in ears

If you are in an enclosed area and experience any of these symptoms or are going to give First Aid to someone suspected of carbon monoxide:

- Move to fresh air.
- Use artificial respiration if breathing has stopped.
- Get medical help.
- Keep the victim quiet, lying down, and warm.

If you must rescue someone who has been exposed to carbon monoxide, don't become another victim. Working safely in high concentrations of carbon monoxide requires appropriate breathing apparatus or lots of fresh air.

LOSS CONTROL CENTER

For more information, contact your local Hartford agent or your Hartford Loss Control Consultant. Visit The Hartford's Loss Control web site at <http://www.thehartford.com/corporate/losscontrol/>

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