

BETter Living ...

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As the Season Changes

As I write this column today, I look out my window and realize how beautiful the weather is with the sun shining brightly. The temperature is cooler than the past weekend, so I can tell that fall is on the way.

As the season changes to fall and our temperatures drop, we will be starting our furnaces to heat our homes. Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a gas that you cannot see, taste or smell. Each year, approximately 184 children in the United States die due to carbon monoxide poisoning and more than 20,000 children visit the emergency room.

Do you have a carbon monoxide alarm? If you don't please go get one. Here are some tips from Safe Kids Worldwide:

- Make sure your home has a carbon monoxide alarm. As with smoke alarms, install a carbon monoxide alarm on every level of your home, especially near sleeping areas, and keep them at least 15 feet away from fuel-burning appliances.
- Carbon monoxide alarms are not substitutes for smoke alarms, and vice versa. Combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are available.
- Don't use a grill, generator or camping stove inside your home, garage or near a window.
- If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Don't leave a car, SUV or motorcycle engine running inside a garage.
- Never use your oven or stovetop to heat your home.
- On the outside of your home, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove and fireplace are clear of snow and other debris.
- If using gasoline-powered devices, store gasoline in a locked location where children cannot access it. Keep only small quantities in an approved container that has child safety features.
- Keep gasoline away from any source of heat, spark or flame. Even common household appliances such as water heaters and clothes dryers can start a gasoline fire. Be sure to store your gasoline away from anything that could ignite it.

With the tips above, you should now be prepared to reduce the chance of carbon monoxide exposure. If you do not already own one, remember to purchase a carbon monoxide alarm.

For more information visit: www.safekids.org.