

## California's Carbon Monoxide Alarm Law Requires CO Alarms in Homes Beginning July 1, 2011

Beginning July 1, 2011 all single-family dwellings in California containing a fossil-fuel burning heater, appliance, fireplace or attached garage must have a carbon monoxide alarm installed. This new safety measure is part of the California Carbon Monoxide Prevention Act passed in May 2010. ([http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/09-10/bill/sen/sb\\_0151-0200/sb\\_183\\_bill\\_20100507\\_chaptered.html](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/09-10/bill/sen/sb_0151-0200/sb_183_bill_20100507_chaptered.html))

Carbon monoxide, known as the "silent killer," is an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas, and the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States. In a recent survey, 87% of California homeowners revealed they had fuel-burning appliances in their homes, such as furnaces, gas ranges, stoves or clothes dryers; portable heaters; fireplaces or portable gas generators—all of which are potential sources of CO. When fuel-burning appliances malfunction or are improperly ventilated, CO can build up in your home.

Initially, CO poisoning has flu-like symptoms, including headache and nausea, and often residents are completely unaware they are being poisoned. CO poisoning can lead to death, and grave and permanent injuries including brain and lung damage, impaired vision, and heart problems. Working CO alarms are the only safe way to detect this deadly gas in your home.

Carbon monoxide alarms can cost as little as \$20 and can be purchased at retailers like Wal-Mart, True Value and The Home Depot. In addition to installing a carbon monoxide alarm on each floor of your home and near sleeping areas, there are additional steps you can take to help protect your family from CO poisoning:

1. Have your fuel burning appliances and fireplaces checked by a professional to ensure they are working properly and are properly vented. Keep barbecue grills outside. Do not use them in your garage or inside your home for cooking, or as an alternative heater. Do not use gas generators inside a home or garage, or outside near a window where fumes may seep into the home.

To learn more about California's carbon monoxide alarm law and CO safety please visit [www.casafehomes.org](http://www.casafehomes.org)

