



## A Message from the Charleston Fire Department About Carbon Monoxide Safety

Carbon monoxide danger is highest in the winter season when heating units and fireplaces are being fully utilized and houses are closed up. During this time of year, pay close attention to your carbon monoxide alarms. If your alarm activates, call 9-1-1 and vacate your residence. The Charleston Fire Department will respond to your home and take readings with specialized meters to ensure your home is safe.

### **What is Carbon Monoxide?**

- A colorless, odorless, and poisonous gas that can be fatal
- Produced by incomplete burning of solid, liquid, and gas fuels
- Appliances fueled with natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas, oil, kerosene, coal, or wood can produce Carbon-monoxide
- Burning charcoal and running cars produce carbon monoxide

### **What are the signs and symptoms of CO poisoning?**

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Shortness of Breath
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Flu like symptoms
- Breathing in as little as one percent of CO for three minutes can be fatal

### **CO Safety:**

- Install a carbon monoxide detector if your dwelling is equipped with fuel/gas fired appliances or furnace
- Make sure your heating unit is serviced annually
- Make sure your fireplaces are cleaned annually
- Never burn charcoal inside home, garage, tent, or vehicle
- Never leave a car running inside a garage, even if the door is open
- Never use gas appliances such as ranges, ovens, or clothes dryers for heating your home
- Never operate unvented fuel/gas burning appliances in any room with closed doors or windows or in any room people are sleeping in.
- Do not use gasoline powered tools or engines indoors

### **What should I do if my alarm activates or I think I may have CO poisoning?**

- Call 9-1-1 and have fire department respond
- Vacate residence into fresh air
- Do not re-enter structure until the fire department says your home is safe to enter
- Report any of your symptoms so medical aid can be provided
- Don't hesitate to call for help!

**“Your Safety, Our Commitment”**