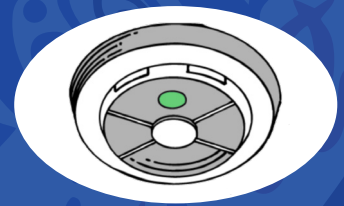


WINTER FIRE SAFETY

# SMOKE ALARMS & CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS



Working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors are essential fire safety tools. When properly installed and maintained, they can help save lives by providing an early warning of smoke and toxic gas.

## WHY YOU NEED THEM

**Smoke Alarms.** Smoke alarms warn you when there is smoke. Most house fire deaths are the result of inhaling the hot, thick, toxic smoke from fire that can quickly disorient and incapacitate you.

**Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detectors.** CO detectors warn you when CO reaches a dangerous level in your home. Carbon monoxide is a toxic gas that you can't see or smell but can be harmful if you are exposed to it. CO is produced when fuel in fuel-burning appliances like gas stoves, furnaces, and fireplaces don't burn completely. Low levels of CO can cause headache, nausea, and fatigue; exposure to high levels can be fatal.

**Combined Smoke and CO Alarms.** These combination units provide detection and warning of both smoke and carbon monoxide.

## INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE

**Placement.** Install smoke alarms and CO detectors according to the manufacturer's instructions. Place them on every level of the home, outside sleeping areas, and in each bedroom. To minimize nuisance alarms, avoid placing smoke alarms within 10 feet of cooking appliances and keep CO detectors at least 10 feet from fuel-burning appliances.

**Testing.** Make sure your alarms are working. Test smoke alarms and CO detectors monthly by pushing the test button. Change batteries once a year, or when the low-battery signal beeps. Some alarms come with a ten-year battery.

**Replacement.** Smoke alarms need replacing every 10 years. CO detectors require replacement every seven to ten years. If your unit malfunctions before that time, replace it.

## HOME FIRE ESCAPE PLANNING

**Plan.** When a fire occurs in your home, every second counts. Create a home fire escape plan to get out quickly and safely. Plan two ways out of every room and make sure exit routes are clutter-free. Windows and doors leading outside should open easily. Decide on a family meeting place a safe distance from your home.

**Practice.** Having a plan isn't enough. Regular practice will ensure everyone in your home knows what to do if there is a fire and the alarm sounds. Practice your home fire drill using different ways out and at different times of the day and night.

**In the event of fire.** If the alarm sounds, get out and stay out. Never go back inside for anything. If you must go through smoke, stay low. When outside, call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number.

## PREVENT CARBON MONOXIDE BUILD-UP

Have fuel-burning appliances installed and serviced by a licenced contractor.

After a snowstorm, check that vents are not covered with snow.

Place generators outside in a dry location well away from windows, doors, and vents that can allow CO into your home. Never use generators indoors.

Always use kitchen vents and exhaust hoods when cooking.

Never leave a car running in an attached garage.

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