



# Carbon Monoxide Prevention

**>> You and your family can rest easy knowing you have a working carbon monoxide detector.**

NYSEG and RG&E are concerned with your safety and well-being. Please review this important information about carbon monoxide to help keep you and your family safe.

## About Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas. When inhaled, carbon monoxide crowds out life-sustaining oxygen from your red blood cells.

- Carbon monoxide poisoning can happen in a matter of minutes.
- Exposure to carbon monoxide can cause flu-like symptoms, including headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea and loss of muscle control.
- Prolonged exposure to carbon monoxide can lead to serious illness and even death.
- Carbon monoxide is found in combustion byproducts, such as those produced by small gasoline engines, generators, or by burning charcoal, coal, oil, wood, propane or natural gas. Carbon monoxide from these sources can build up in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces.

## Suspect a Carbon Monoxide Problem?

**Get up, get out and call us or 911 from a neighbor's phone.**

We'll respond quickly to make sure you and your family are safe.

- DO NOT assume someone else will report the condition.
- Provide the exact location, including cross streets.



**The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends CO alarms be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.**

## Preventing Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- Have your heating system, water heater and any other coal, oil, wood, propane or natural gas burning appliances, as well as chimneys, flues and vents checked once a year by a professional.
- Install a CO detector in your home. Effective February 22, 2010, all New York state residences must have a CO detector. Amanda's Law – named for a Buffalo teenager who died from CO – applies to all one- and two-family homes, condominiums or cooperatives, and multiple dwellings where there are heating and cooking appliances, which could emit the deadly gas. CO detectors are also required in all dwellings with an attached garage. In any new home, CO detectors must be hard-wired.
- Check or replace the battery in your CO detector when you change the time on your clocks each spring and fall.
- Keep vents and flues free of debris. Check them during windy or snowy conditions, as debris can block ventilation lines.
- Prevent CO poisoning through the proper installation, maintenance and use of appliances in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. ALWAYS ensure plenty of ventilation and air circulation.
- **Never** use a natural gas range or oven to heat a home.
- **Never** use a grill, hibachi, lantern or portable camping stove inside a home, tent or camper.



## Check Your Heating System Annually

Besides the safety benefits, a well-maintained heating system will run more efficiently and save you money. Ask a professional heating contractor to check your furnace or boiler, plus all vents, chimneys and flues before you use them. A typical heating system check-up should include adjusting the fuel/air mixture, cleaning nozzles or burners, checking filters and testing the system.

### Other ways to stay safe:

- Be sure there are no obstructions in your registers, cold-air return ducts or heating ducts.
- Change or clean your furnace filters frequently during the heating season. Dirty or clogged air filters restrict airflow and make your heating system work harder.
- Keep all combustible materials far away from your heating equipment.
- Leave natural gas appliance installation to the professionals. Only professional plumbing and heating contractors or appliance installers should install natural gas lines, change appliance connectors or check service lines running from the natural gas meter to your appliances.
- Studies have linked corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) sometimes used for natural gas appliances or equipment with the risk of fire due to lightning strikes. Proper bonding and grounding can reduce this risk. Consider asking the professional checking your heating system about this.



To find a contractor or appliance installer, check your telephone directory or visit the New York State Attorney General's Web page, [nyknowyourcontractor.com](http://nyknowyourcontractor.com) for tips.

## Portable Generator Safety



When operated improperly, portable generators can also cause carbon monoxide problems. Consider these portable generator safety tips:

- Operate your generator outdoors in a clean, dry, well-ventilated area, and never indoors or in a garage.
- Make sure exhaust gases are safely vented away from the house, windows or other enclosed areas.
- Always operate your portable generator in clean, dry locations.



For more information on generators, get our free *Emergency Generator Safety* information sheet at [nyseg.com](http://nyseg.com) or [rge.com](http://rge.com). Click on "Usage and Safety," "Electrical Safety" and then on "Generator Safety."

## Important Contact Information



**Natural gas odors or emergencies:**  
**1.800.572.1121** (24 hours a day, every day)  
or call **911**

**Electricity interruptions or emergencies:**  
**nyseg.com** or **1.800.572.1131**  
(24 hours a day, every day)

**Hearing- and speech-impaired:**  
Dial **711** (New York Relay Service)

**nyseg.com**



**Natural gas odors or emergencies:**  
**1.800.743.1702** (24 hours a day, every day)  
or call **911**

**Electricity interruptions or emergencies:**  
**rge.com** or **1.800.743.1701**  
(24 hours a day, every day)

**Hearing- and speech-impaired:** Dial **711**  
(New York Relay Service) or **1.800.962.3293**

**rge.com**