

Local municipal building and fire officials are the best source of information concerning carbon monoxide alarms in new construction. In the future, inspectors will be checking the installation of CO alarms during building or fire safety inspections.

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CARBON MONOXIDE IS DANGEROUS!

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas produced by incompletely burning fossil fuels containing carbon. Carbon monoxide poisoning can cause brain damage and death. You can't see it, smell it, or taste it; but carbon monoxide can kill. CO can be formed, for example, by open flames, or fuel burning space heaters, water heaters, furnaces, boilers and clothes dryers.

Carbon monoxide is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States. The federal Center for Disease Control estimates CO poisoning annually claims nearly 500 lives, and causes more than 15,000 visits to hospital emergency rooms. Carbon Monoxide is produced by common household fuel burning appliances. When not properly vented, CO from these appliances can build up in a room or building, displacing oxygen.

Early symptoms of CO poisoning such as headaches, nausea, and fatigue, are often mistaken for something other than CO because the deadly gas goes undetected as it builds up in a building. Prolonged Exposure can lead to brain damage and death.

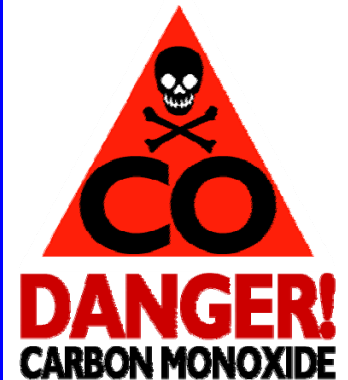


Carbon Monoxide Alarms

IMPORTANT NEW RULES

2007 Wisconsin Act 205 set forth the requirement for installation of carbon monoxide alarms in most new commercial-residential construction as of October 1, 2008, and in most existing commercial-residential buildings by April 1, 2010.

What does the Code say?



What is a carbon monoxide alarm?

A carbon monoxide (CO) alarm is a device that will detect the presence of CO and create a noise which gives people in the area a chance to safely leave the building. CO alarms by themselves are not smoke alarms and vice versa. However, there are combination smoke/CO alarms. CO alarms are usually plugged into a wall electrical outlet or wired directly into a building's electrical system.

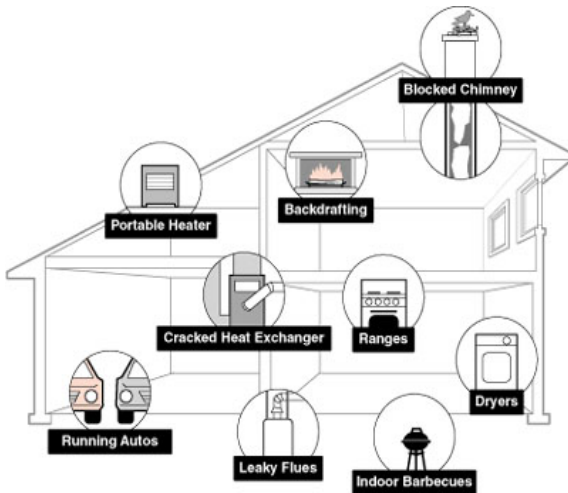
Hard Wired Style Carbon Monoxide Alarm



Plug In Style Carbon Monoxide Alarm



Possible sources of Carbon Monoxide



Requirements for commercial-residential buildings or tourist rooming houses existing on October 1, 2008, or receiving plan approval prior to October 1, 2008

-- Installation of carbon monoxide alarms by April 1, 2010.

-- No mandatory type of power sources for the carbon monoxide alarms, thereby allowing batteries, electrical outlet plug-ins, or wiring directly to the building's electrical service.

-- Omission of carbon monoxide alarms is allowed provided there are no attached garages and all of the fuel burning appliances are of sealed combustion type either under warranty or annually inspected for carbon monoxide emissions.

Requirements for new commercial-residential buildings as of October 1, 2008

(Commercial Building Code, Comm. 62.1200):

-- Installation of carbon monoxide alarms where any type of fuel burning appliances are installed.

-- The carbon monoxide alarms must be continuously powered by the building's electrical service with battery backup.

Requirements for new tourist rooming houses

(cabins under the scope of Wisconsin's Uniform Dwelling Code, Comm. 21.095) as of October 1, 2008:

-- Installation of carbon monoxide alarms where any type of fuel burning appliances are installed.

--The carbon monoxide alarms must be continuously powered by the building's electrical service with battery backup.

Where do they need to be installed?

Statutory Installation Requirements in 2007 Wisconsin Act 205

Except as provided in par. (b), the owner of a residential building shall install a carbon monoxide alarm in all of the following places:

-In the basement of the building if the basement has a fuel-burning appliance.

-Within 15 feet of each sleeping area of a unit that has a fuel-burning appliance.

-Within 15 feet of each sleeping area of a unit that is immediately adjacent to a unit that has a fuel-burning appliance.

-In each room that has a fuel-burning appliance and that is not used as a sleeping area. A carbon monoxide alarm shall be installed under this subdivision not more than 75 feet from the fuel-burning appliance.

-In each hallway leading from a unit that has a fuel-burning appliance, in a location that is within 75 feet from the unit, except that, if there is no electrical outlet within this distance, the owner shall place the carbon monoxide alarm at the closest available electrical outlet in the hallway.

(b) If a unit is not part of a multiunit building, the owner of the residential building need not install more than one carbon monoxide alarm in the unit.

I live in a one or two family dwelling (that is not tourist rooming). Do I need to install a CO alarm?

Most one and two family dwellings are not included in the regulations, although installing CO alarms in these homes is a **good idea**.