



OHIO WINTER SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK 2008

The Licking County Planning Department and the Licking County Homeland Security/Emergency Management/911 Agency have partnered with the National Weather Service and the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness to increase the knowledge of citizens regarding severe winter weather events for the 2008-2009 winter weather season.

Carbon Monoxide Information and Safety Tips

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas that can cause sudden illness and death. Carbon monoxide is found in combustion fumes, such as those produced by cars and trucks, small gasoline engines, stoves, lanterns, gas ranges, burning charcoal and wood and heating systems. Carbon monoxide is commonly known as "the silent killer." When a person breathes air that contains carbon monoxide, it is absorbed through the bloodstream, displaces oxygen and inhibits the blood's ability to carry oxygen to vital organs such as the heart and brain. Each year, more than 500 Americans die from unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning. In addition, several thousand individuals are treated in hospital emergency rooms for carbon monoxide poisoning.

The most common symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain and confusion. High levels of carbon monoxide ingestion can cause loss of consciousness, coma and death. Unless suspected, carbon monoxide poisoning can be difficult to diagnose because the symptoms mimic other illnesses.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Precautions:

- Carbon monoxide can be easily and cheaply detected in the home; several relatively inexpensive alarms are available. Consider placing a carbon monoxide alarm on each level of your home.
- Have the heating system inspected and serviced at least once a year.
- Have your chimney vent checked annually for blockages, corrosion, loose connections or debris.
- Ensure that chimney flues are completely opened when fireplaces are in use.
- Keep gas appliances properly adjusted and serviced.
- Never use a gas oven to heat your home.
- Never use a gas or charcoal grill inside your home or in a closed garage.
- Don't sleep in any room with a non-vented gas or kerosene space heater.
- If using a portable generator during a power outage, make sure the generator is operating in a well-ventilated area. Never refuel a generator while it is running or hot.
- Never leave a car or generator running in an attached garage, even when the garage door is open.

To view the State Fire Marshal's brochure "Carbon Monoxide – the Silent Killer in Your Home," click on: http://com.state.oh.us/sfm/documents/fmpr_carbon.pdf