



Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, toxic gas that interferes with the oxygen-carrying capacity of blood. CO is nonirritating and can overcome people without warning. Many people die from CO poisoning, usually while using gasoline-powered tools and generators in buildings or semi-enclosed spaces without adequate ventilation.

Effects of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- ⌘ Severe carbon monoxide poisoning causes neurological damage, illness, coma and death.

Symptoms of CO Exposure

- ⌘ Headaches, dizziness and drowsiness.
- ⌘ Nausea, vomiting and tightness across the chest.

Some Sources of Exposure

- ⌘ Portable generators or generators in buildings.
- ⌘ Concrete cutting saws and compressors.
- ⌘ Power trowels, floor buffers and space heaters.
- ⌘ Welding.
- ⌘ Gasoline-powered engines and pumps.

Preventing CO Exposure

- ⌘ Never use a generator indoors or in an enclosed or partially enclosed space such as a garage, crawl space or basement.
- ⌘ Generators used outdoors should not be used near doors, windows or vents that could lead to CO buildup inside.
- ⌘ When using space heaters and portable stoves, ensure that they are in good working order to reduce CO buildup and never use in enclosed spaces or indoors unless they are approved for safe indoor use.
- ⌘ Use pneumatic, electric or battery-operated tools and equipment when possible.
- ⌘ Medical attention should be sought promptly for symptoms of CO poisoning, including dizziness and drowsiness.

Adapted from OSHA Quick Card 3267-09N-05, U.S. Department of Labor.



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