

CO Alarms MN 299.50

During the 2006 Minnesota State Legislative Session a law requiring carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in all single family homes and multifamily apartment units was passed. The section of the law that pertains to residential homes and apartment units goes into effect on August 1, 2008. After August 1st, all existing single family homes must be equipped with approved CO alarms. This is Minnesota Statute 299F.50 and detailed information can be found by placing the statute in your search engine.

An approved and fully operational carbon monoxide alarm should be installed within 10 feet of each room used for sleeping purposes. Bedrooms on separate floors or that exceed the 10 feet distance between alarms will require additional CO alarms. Along with location considerations always follow the manufactures instructions. Make sure you follow the recommend replacement schedule of the CO alarm. Date the back of your CO alarm so you know when it is time to replace it. Purchase a unit that has been certified by a recognized testing facility, Underwriters Laboratories (UL) is the most common facility used in the United States.

Batteries should never be removed from a CO alarm for any reason. The batteries in your CO alarms should be changed at the same time you change the batteries in your smoke detectors. When Daylight Savings Time ends in the spring and when it begins in the fall. Place brand new batteries in your CO alarms. If there is still life left in the batteries, reuse them in a children's toy or in one of your electric gadgets. Don't ever put a used battery in something your family's life depends upon.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that can be produced by burning fuels such as natural gas, propane, oil, kerosene, coal, or wood. Properly installed and operating fuel-burning appliances pose minimal CO hazards. However, under certain conditions, all appliances that burn fuels can leak deadly levels of CO into the home.

Many items produce carbon monoxide, car exhaust (attached garages), gas appliances, gas stoves, unvented gas fired appliances, BBQ grills, water heaters, and a clogged chimney to name a few.

The initial symptoms of Carbon Monoxide poisoning are similar to flu (but without the fever) and include headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea and dizziness. Exposure to high levels of CO can cause death.

If you have more questions about CO alarms you can e-mail a **Minnesota State Fire Marshal** at firecode@state.mn.us .