

FIRE MARSHAL TOWN OF NEW CANAAN

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Press Release

Carbon Monoxide Safety

A New Canaan family is very lucky they had a working carbon monoxide (CO) detector last night because they were alerted to a potential life threatening problem with their heating system. Responding Fire Fighters found levels of 50 ppm (parts per million) when they sampled the home's atmosphere. The heating system was shut down and the home ventilated and a service tech was called.

Signs of CO poisoning are headaches, nausea and bright red complexion. Long term exposure to low levels of CO can be just as bad a short term exposure to high levels.

CO is created when incomplete combustion occurs from automobiles, heating systems, generators, fireplaces, etc. Following are some tips to help keep you and your family safe from "The Silent Killer":

- Have at least one CO detector outside of each sleeping area. One on each floor is optimal. The best/easiest are the devices that plug into a wall outlet. Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- CO detectors generally expire after 5 years, depending on manufacturer. Expiration dates may be found on the back of the device. If expired, replace them immediately.
- If your detector is part of an alarm system, make sure system is properly serviced by alarm tech each year.
- Never leave your car running in the attached garage – even with the doors open.
- In times of heavy snow, make sure low level exhaust vents from high efficiency furnaces and water heaters outside the home are not blocked.
- Never run a generator or other internal combustion engine in an attached garage.
- Never use charcoal indoors – even in fireplace.

For questions regarding CO, or any other fire safety topics, please contact the Fire Marshal's office at 203-594-3030. If desired a courtesy home inspection can be arranged.