



CARBON MONOXIDE EXPOSURE RISKS AND PREVENTION

December 22, 2022

We are expecting blizzard effect snow in the upper and lower peninsulas, and a winter storm warning along with temperatures well below freezing this weekend. The Michigan Poison & Drug Information Center asks all Michiganders to be prepared and safe during the challenges that may come with the expected weather forecast.

If the power goes out and you need to run a gas-powered backup generator, the Michigan Poison & Drug Information Center urges everyone to run generators safely. Carbon monoxide production results when a carbon-based fuel (gas, propane, natural gas, wood, charcoal) does not burn completely in a furnace, water heater, grill, generator, or internal combustion engine. The resulting gas is colorless and odorless and therefore cannot be seen or sensed.

People exposed to carbon monoxide may feel as if they have a cold or the flu. It should be especially worrisome when a group of people have the same complaints at the same time. They may complain of:

- ·Headaches
- ·Nausea
- ·Dizziness
- ·Tiredness
- ·Confusion
- ·Muscle aches and pains

DO NOT ignore these symptoms. Symptoms can quickly become worse and lead to death. Call **911** immediately if there is any possible risk of exposure to carbon monoxide.

If you are in your home and experience symptoms that may be related to carbon monoxide exposure, evacuate everyone from your home and leave doors and windows open while waiting for Emergency Medical Services to arrive.

Infants, women who are pregnant, the elderly, and people with chronic health issues have a greater risk for complications with exposure to carbon monoxide. Check on those at higher risk for complications and assure safety measures are in place in all homes. Working carbon monoxide detectors should be installed on every floor of a home.

Additional steps to ensure safety include:

- ·Avoid using kerosene space heaters in homes or enclosed areas.
- ·Do not run gas generators in your home or garage or within 20 feet of your home or buildings.
- ·Do not leave cars running in a garage, especially if the garage is attached to your home.
- ·Do not run outdoor grills inside or near your home.
- ·Do not attempt to heat your home by use of a gas oven or range.

To learn more about carbon monoxide safety, visit www.mipoisonhelp.org and click on the “Education” tab for Fall Safety Educational Resources. Click on the Safety Education tab for “Seasonal and Holiday Poison Prevention” for more resources.

If you have more questions about carbon monoxide poisoning, please call:

Michigan Poison & Drug Information Center
at Wayne State University School of Medicine

1-800-222-1222

Available 24/7/365

www.mipoisonhelp.org

