

Avoid invisible danger in your home



You can't see it, taste it, or smell it, but carbon monoxide can be deadly. With temperatures finally cooling, and people firing up furnaces and boilers, it's time to think about carbon monoxide poisoning.

CO "is created when fuels don't burn properly," says Bloomfield Acting Fire Official Thomas Wilson. Vehicles or generators that run in enclosed spaces can produce dangerous, even deadly, levels of carbon monoxide.

Part of the danger is that CO poisoning can be confused with the flu, food poisoning or other illnesses. Symptoms include headache, nausea, dizziness, light headedness, and shortness of breath.

"A person can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a long period of time or a large amount over a

short time," said Wilson. "If the CO alarm sounds, move outdoors or near an open window or door. Account for everyone in the house and call 911 or the Fire Department."

Wilson advises all residents to:

- Install CO alarms outside each sleeping room and on every level of the home.
- Test alarms monthly.
- Keep dryer, stove, furnace, and fireplace vents clear of ice, snow, dirt, leaves and other debris.
- Have fuel-burning equipment inspected by a professional every year.

The Bloomfield Fire Department has special equipment to test the level of CO in your home. If you are not sure your carbon monoxide alarm is functioning correctly, call them at (973) 680-4153.