

DANGERS OF SMOKE & CARBON MONOXIDE

TD Meloche Monnex is proud to present these safety tips to help homeowners avoid falling victim to one of the top five leading causes of accidental death in Canada.



Smoke Detectors Save Lives

Fire is the third leading cause of accidental death in Canada. Approximately 85% of fire deaths occur in the home, and most are due to smoke inhalation. Properly installed and maintained smoke detectors (alarms) are the first line of defence to warn you of a fire in time to let you escape. Think of them as an early warning system to help save lives!

There are two types of smoke detectors

All smoke detectors sold in Canada are regulated and are required to meet performance standards developed by the Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (ULC). It is up to the manufacturer to ensure their units comply with the appropriate ULC standards.

1. The ionization-type of smoke detector – generally better suited for detecting fast, flaming fires which consume combustible materials and spread quickly. Some examples include paper burning in a waste basket or a grease fire in the kitchen.
2. The photoelectric-type of smoke detector – generally better suited for detecting slow, smouldering fires which could smoulder for hours before bursting into flames. Some examples include cigarettes burning in couches or bedding.

Basic Tips

- Make sure the detectors in your home are in good working condition. For a quick alert to any type of fire, you may want to consider having one of each type installed in your home or a unit that combines both technologies.
- Replace smoke detectors that are more than five years old.
- If battery operated, replace batteries regularly. A nearly fool-proof way to remember is to change batteries when you change your clocks.
- Install a detector on each level of your home, including the basement, especially near or in bedrooms.
- Have and practice a fire escape plan with your family.
- Have and know how to use your fire extinguisher.
- Purchase smoke alarms that carry the label of the Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (ULC).

Carbon Monoxide – “The Silent Killer”

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a tasteless, colourless and odourless poisonous gas. It is produced when fuels such as natural gas, oil, wood, propane and kerosene don't get enough air to burn up completely. Damaged or blocked venting inside home heating systems can allow CO to build up inside a home. Statistics show that over 15% of incidents investigated at private dwellings or residential locations involved CO.

Be Alarmed!

How to ensure that you and your family are not exposed to the dangers of CO:

- Install a certified, properly maintained CO Detector – it will warn you of rising levels of carbon monoxide, giving you and your family the time to escape.
- Since CO alarms do not detect fire or smoke AND smoke alarms do not detect CO, your home needs to be equipped with both. Install one on every level of your home or cottage, using the manufacturer's instructions as your guide.
- Eliminate CO emissions at the source. Make maintenance of your fuel burning appliances, equipment and venting systems an absolute priority.
- Know the symptoms of poisoning. They are similar to the flu – nausea, headache, burning eyes, confusion and drowsiness – except there is no fever. If they occur get everyone, including pets, outside to fresh air and call 911 or the local fire department.
- As in the case of smoke detector, batteries in your CO alarm are to be changed at least twice a year.

The leading cause of fires and poor maintenance of fuel burning appliances is human error and neglect. That's why taking safety precautions could help to reduce the number and severity of fires and CO incidents.



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