

Make sure you have CO detectors and that they are working properly

Ontario's Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week is running from Nov. 1 to 7, and Caledon Fire and Emergency Services reminds everyone to prevent carbon monoxide (CO) from getting into their home by getting all fuel-burning appliances inspected annually. "In Ontario, more than 80 per cent of injuries and deaths from CO occur in the home," Fire Chief Darryl Bailey said. "We want to make sure everyone is safe from CO. One way to do this is to get all fuel-burning appliances inspected by a registered contractor." Visit [COSafety.ca](https://cosafety.ca) to find a registered contractor near you.

Caledon Fire and Emergency Services also reminds everyone to install CO alarms in their home if they have a fuel-burning appliance, a fireplace or an attached garage. Fuel-burning appliances can include furnaces, hot water heaters, gas or wood fireplaces, portable fuel-burning heaters and generators, barbecues, stoves and vehicles.

There must be a working CO alarm adjacent to each sleeping area of the house if there is a fuel-burning appliance, a fireplace or an attached garage. For added protection, install a carbon monoxide alarm on every storey of the home, according to manufacturer's instructions.

If you live in a condominium or apartment building with a service room, CO alarms must be installed in the service room and adjacent to each sleeping area of all homes above, below and beside the service room. In condo or apartment buildings that have a garage, CO alarms must be installed adjacent to each sleeping area of all homes above, below and beside the garage.

CO is known as the silent killer because it is an invisible, tasteless and odourless gas that can be deadly.

It is produced when fuels such as propane, gasoline, natural gas, heating oil or wood do not burn completely in fuel-burning appliances and devices such as furnaces, gas or wood fireplaces, hot water heaters, stoves, barbecues, portable fuel-burning heaters and generators and vehicles.

To prevent CO from getting into the home:

- Ensure fuel-burning appliances, chimneys and vents are cleaned and inspected annually. Visit [COSafety.ca](https://cosafety.ca) to find a registered contractor near you.

- Check that all outside appliance vents are not blocked.

- Gas and charcoal barbecues should only be used outside, away from all doors, windows, vents and other building openings. Never use barbecues inside garages, even if the garage doors are open.

- Portable fuel-burning generators should only be used outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from windows, doors, vents and other building openings.

- Ensure all portable fuel-burning heaters are vented properly, according to manufacturer's instructions.

- Open the flue before using a fireplace for adequate ventilation.

- Never run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor inside a garage, even if the garage doors are open. Always remove a vehicle from the garage immediately after starting it.

Exposure to CO can cause flu-like symptoms, such as headaches, nausea, dizziness, as well as confusion, drowsiness, loss of consciousness and death.

If a CO alarm sounds, and occupants suffer from symptoms of CO poisoning, get everyone out of the home immediately then call 9-1-1 from outside the building.

If the CO alarm sounds and no one is suffering from symptoms of CO poisoning, check to see if the battery needs replacing, or the alarm has reached its "end-of-life" before calling 9-1-1.

A CO alarm sounds different than a smoke alarm. Test both alarms monthly and make sure everyone in the home knows the difference between the two alarm sounds.

Don't be confused by the sound of the CO alarm's low-battery warning. Follow the CO alarm manufacturer's instructions and know the difference between the low-battery warning, the "end-of-life" warning and the alarm alerting to the presence of CO in the home. For more CO safety tips, visit [COSafety.ca](https://cosafety.ca)