

Nov. 1 to 7 ? Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week

The winter months hold the highest risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, so Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week is a good reminder that CO alarms are now mandatory in all residential buildings.

CO is a gas which is poisonous and has no odor. It can make a person feel sick and can be deadly. In the home, heating and cooking devices that burn fuel can be sources of carbon monoxide.

?If your home has a fuel-burning appliance or an attached garage, you must have a working CO alarm outside all sleeping areas of the home,? said Fire Chief David Forfar. ?For added protection, install a carbon monoxide alarm on every storey of the home according to manufacturer's instructions.?

Fuel-burning appliances can include furnaces, hot water heaters, gas or wood fireplaces, portable fuel-burning heaters and generators, barbecues, stoves and vehicles.

To prevent the build-up of CO in the home, ensure fuel-burning appliances are cleaned and inspected by professionals every year. And keep vents clear of snow and other debris. Portable fuel-burning generators, and gas and charcoal barbecues must 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.

Never use the stove or oven to heat the home.

Open the flu for adequate ventilation before using a fireplace.

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.

Test CO alarms every month and replace batteries twice annually. Replace CO alarms according to the manufacturer's instructions.

If the CO alarm sounds, get everyone out of the home immediately and call 911.