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## The “Silent Killer” More Prevalent in Winter



Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that often goes undetected. It is produced by burning fuel in cars or trucks, small engines, stoves, lanterns, grills, fireplaces, gas ranges, portable generators or furnaces. When the gas builds up in enclosed spaces, those who breathe it can be poisoned and exposure can lead to permanent neurological damage or death.

More than 400 Americans die from unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning every year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Risks increase in the winter as people turn on their heating systems and warm their cars in garages. The National Safety Council has offered the following safety tips regarding carbon monoxide:

### Preventing Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- Install battery-powered carbon monoxide detectors near the bedrooms in your home. Be sure to check and replace the batteries, when necessary.
- Have your heating system, water heater and any other gas or coal-burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- Do not use portable flameless chemical heaters indoors.
- Never use a generator inside your home, basement or garage or less than 20 feet from any window, door or vent.
- Have your chimney checked and cleaned every year and make sure your fireplace damper is open before lighting a fire and well after the fire is extinguished.
- Make sure your gas appliances are vented properly.
- Never use a gas oven for heating your home.
- Never let a car idle in the garage.

**20,000**  
The number of  
emergency room visits in  
the United States each  
year caused by carbon  
monoxide-related issues.

*Source: Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention*

### Know the Symptoms

Low to moderate carbon monoxide poisoning is characterized by headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea and dizziness. High level carbon monoxide poisoning results in mental confusion, vomiting, loss of muscular coordination, loss or consciousness or death.

If your carbon monoxide detector sounds or you are experiencing any of the above symptoms, immediately move to fresh air, call 911 and do not re-enter the area until you are told to do so by emergency responders.

For more information, visit [nsc.org](http://nsc.org).

## Proper Workstation Setup

Many employees spend much of their time throughout the day at their computer, which can lead to injuries to the muscles, skeletal system and/or nervous system. These injuries from poor ergonomics can be in the form of a one-time injury or the result of years of repetitive motions.

Often these injuries are not from improper equipment, but from improper setup of that equipment. Ensure your workstation is set up properly using the guidelines below:

- Sit back in your current chair.
- Position your chair height so that the top of your monitor is 2-3 inches above your eye level.
- Use an optical glass anti-glare filter on your screen, if needed.
- Sit at arm's length approximately 18-30 inches from your monitor.
- Place your feet on the floor or on a stable footrest.
- Keep your wrists flat and straight in relation to your forearms to use your mouse or keyboard.
- Keep your arms and elbows relaxed close to your body.
- Center your monitor and keyboard in front of you.
- Use a negative tilt keyboard tray with an upper mouse platform or downward tiltable platform adjacent to your keyboard.
- For every 25 minutes of sitting, stretch for approximately one minute.

Click [here](#) for more information on the proper setup of your seated workstation or click [here](#) for more information on the proper setup of a sit/stand workstation.

If you have any questions, please contact EHS at [ehs@yale.edu](mailto:ehs@yale.edu) or 203-785-3550.

## Digging Out

The snow has stopped and now comes the cleanup. Snow removal, coupled with cold weather, can be a difficult and dangerous activity with the potential for exhaustion, dehydration, back injuries or heart attacks.

The following snow removal safety tips from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) can help reduce your risk of injury:

### Shoveling

- Take frequent breaks in warm areas.
- Scoop small amounts of snow at a time and push the snow instead of lifting it, where possible.
- Keep your back straight when lifting snow. Lift with your legs and do not turn or twist your body.



### Snow Blower

- Never attempt to clear a jam by hand. Turn the machine off and wait for all moving parts to stop. Use a long stick to clear wet snow or debris from the machine.
- Keep your hands and feet away from moving parts at all times.
- Refuel a snow blower prior to starting the machine. Do not add fuel when the equipment is running or when the engine is hot.

### Avoiding Slips

- Clear walking surfaces of snow and ice and spread deicer as quickly as possible after a storm.
- Wear proper footwear when walking on snow or ice is unavoidable. Insulated and water resistant boots with good rubber treads are preferred.
- Take short steps and walk slowly so you can react quickly to a change in traction.

For more information, visit [osha.gov](http://osha.gov).

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"Carefulness costs you nothing. Carelessness may cost you your life." - Author Unknown

## Kidde Recalls Fire Extinguishers



Nearly 38 million Kidde fire extinguishers have been recalled after they were found to clog or require excessive force to discharge and can fail to activate during an emergency, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Additionally, the nozzle can detach with enough force to pose an impact hazard.

This recall, announced on November 2, 2017, is for Kidde fire extinguishers with plastic handle fire extinguishers and push-button Pindicator fire extinguishers. More than 130 models manufactured between January 1, 1973 and August 15, 2017 are included in the recall. The units were sold in red, white and silver and are either ABC or BC rated.

The model number is printed on the fire extinguisher label. For units produced in 2007 and beyond, the date of manufacture is a 10-digit date code printed on the side of the cylinder, near the bottom. Digits five through nine represent the day and year of manufacture in DDDYY format. Date codes for recalled models manufactured from January 2, 2012 through August 15, 2017 are 00212 through 22717. For units produced before 2007, a date code is not printed on the fire extinguisher.

These units sold for \$12 to \$50 and were available at stores nationwide including The Home Depot, Walmart, Sears and online at Amazon.com.

If you have a fire extinguisher included in this recall, you should immediately contact Kidde at 855-271-0773 to request a free replacement fire extinguisher and for instructions on returning the recalled unit.

Click [here](#) for more information.

## Urgent Need for Blood Donations



**American  
Red Cross**

Relentless winter storms have had a significant impact on blood donations,

canceling more than 500 blood drives and resulting in nearly 13,000 uncollected blood and platelet donations. There is an urgent need for donations of all blood types. January is National Blood Donor Month.

Click [here](#) to find a blood drive scheduled in your area.