

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CO

### WHAT IS CO?

CO is an invisible, odorless, tasteless gas produced when fossil fuels do not burn completely, or are exposed to heat (usually fire). Electrical appliances typically do not produce CO.

**These fuels include:** Wood, coal, charcoal, oil, natural gas, gasoline, kerosene, and propane.

Common appliances are often sources of CO. If they are not properly maintained, are improperly ventilated, or malfunction, CO levels can rise quickly. CO is a real danger now that homes are more energy efficient. "Air-tight" homes with added insulation, sealed windows, and other weatherproofing can "trap" CO inside.

### SYMPTOMS OF CO POISONING

These symptoms are related to CO POISONING and should be discussed with a health care professional.

**Mild Exposure:** Slight headache, nausea, vomiting, fatigue ("flu-like" symptoms).

**Medium Exposure:** Throbbing headache, drowsiness, confusion, fast heart rate.

**Extreme Exposure:** Convulsions, unconsciousness, heart and lung failure. Exposure to Carbon Monoxide can cause brain damage, death.

### IMPORTANT!

This Alarm measures exposure to CO over time. It alarms if CO levels are extremely high in a short period of time, or if CO levels reach a certain minimum over a long period of time. The CO Alarm generally sounds an alarm before the onset of symptoms in average, healthy adults. Why is this important? Because you need to be warned of a potential CO problem while you can still react in time. In many reported cases of CO exposure, victims may be aware that they are not feeling well, but become disoriented and can no longer react until it is too late to exit the building or get help. Also, young children and pets may be the first affected. The average healthy adult might not feel any symptoms when the CO Alarm sounds. However, people with cardiac or respiratory problems, infants, unborn babies, pregnant mothers, or elderly people can be more quickly and severely affected by CO. If you experience even mild symptoms of CO poisoning, consult your doctor immediately!

### FINDING THE SOURCE OF CO AFTER AN ALARM

Carbon monoxide (CO) sources, invisible gas, which often makes it difficult to locate the source of CO after an alarm. These are a few of the factors that can make it difficult to locate sources of CO:

- Home well ventilated before by investigator arrives.
- Problem caused by "backdrafting".
- Transient CO problems caused by special circumstances.

Because CO may dissipate by the time an investigator arrives, it may be difficult to locate the source of CO. **BRK Brands, Inc. shall not be obligated to pay for any carbon monoxide investigation or service call.**

### POTENTIAL SOURCES OF CO IN THE HOME OR

#### Fuel-burning appliances/vehicle:

Check for leaks in gas lines. Check for proper operation of gas valves. Check for proper operation of burners. Check for proper operation of gas valves. Check for proper operation of burners. Check for proper operation of gas valves. Check for proper operation of burners.

**Damaged or insufficient venting:**

Check for proper operation of vent pipes. Check for proper operation of vent pipes. Check for proper operation of vent pipes. Check for proper operation of vent pipes.

**Improper use of appliance/device:**

Check for proper operation of barbecue grill or vehicle in an enclosed area (like a garage or screened porch).

**Transient CO Problems:** "transient" or on-again/off-again CO problems can be caused by outdoor conditions and other special circumstances.

**The following conditions can result in transient CO situations:**

1. Excessive spillage or reverse venting of fuel appliances caused by outdoor conditions such as:

- Wind direction and/or velocity, including high, gusty winds. Heavy air in the vent pipes (cold/humid air with extended periods between cycles).
- Negative pressure differential caused by the use of exhaust fans.
- Several appliances running at the same time competing for limited fresh air.
- Vent pipe connections vibrating loose from clothes dryers, furnaces, or water heaters.
- Obstructions in or unconventional vent pipe designs which can amplify the above situations.

2. Extended operation of unvented fuel burning devices (range, oven, fireplace).

3. Temporary CO problems caused by wind blowing close to the ground.

4. Car idling in an open or closed attached garage, or near a house.

These conditions are dangerous because they can trap exhaust in your home. Since these conditions can come and go, they are also hard to recreate during a CO investigation.

### HOW CAN I PROTECT MY FAMILY FROM CO POISONING?

A CO Alarm is an excellent means of protection. It monitors the air and sounds an alarm before Carbon Monoxide levels become threatening for average, healthy adults.

**A CO Alarm is not a substitute for proper maintenance of home appliances.**

To help prevent CO problems and reduce the risk of CO poisoning:

- Clean chimneys and flues yearly. Keep them free of debris, leaves, and nests. Check for proper operation of vent pipes.
- Clean, cracks, or separations. These conditions can prevent proper air movement and cause backdrafting. Never "cap" or cover a chimney.
- Test and maintain all fuel-burning equipment annually. Many local gas or oil companies and HVAC companies offer appliance inspections for a nominal fee.
- Make regular visual inspections of all fuel-burning appliances. Check appliances for excessive rust and scaling. Also, check the flame on the burner and pilot lights. The flame should be blue. A yellow flame means that not being burned completely and CO may be present. Keep the blower door on the furnace closed. Use vents or fans when they are available on all fuel-burning appliances. Make sure appliances are vented to the outside. Do not grill or barbecue indoors, or in garages or on screen porches.
- Check for exhaust backflow from CO sources. Check the draft hood on an operating furnace for a backdraft. Look for cracks on furnace heat exchangers.
- Check the house or garage on the other side of shared wall.
- Keep windows and doors open slightly. If you suspect that CO is escaping into your home, open a window or a door. Opening windows and doors can significantly decrease CO levels.

In addition, familiarize yourself with all enclosed materials. Read this manual in its entirety, and make sure you understand what to do if your CO Alarm sounds.

### REGULATORY INFORMATION FOR SMOKE/CO ALARMS

#### WHAT LEVELS OF CO CAUSE AN ALARM?

Underwriters Laboratories Inc. Standard UL2034 requires residential CO Alarm response to levels of CO and exposure times as follows:

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## ABOUT SMOKE ALARMS

**Battery (DC) operated Smoke Alarms:** Provide protection even when electricity fails, provided the batteries are fresh and correctly installed. Units are easy to install, and do not require professional installation.

**AC powered Smoke Alarms:** Can be interconnected so if one unit senses smoke, all units alarm. They do not operate if electricity fails.

**AC with battery (DC) back-up:** will operate if electricity fails, provided the batteries are fresh and correctly installed. AC and DC/DC units must be interconnected with a qualified electrician.

- On every level of your home, including finished attics and basements.
- Inside every bedroom, especially if people sleep with the door partly or completely closed.

- In the hall of every sleeping area. If your home has multiple sleeping areas, install a unit in each. If a hall is more than 40 feet long (12 meters), install a unit at each end.

- At the top of the first-to-second floor stairway, and at the bottom of the basement stairway.

### IMPORTANT!

Specific requirements for Smoke Alarm installation vary from state to state and from region to region. Check with your local Fire Department for current requirements in your area. It is recommended AC or AC/DC units be interconnected for added protection.

**EXISTING HOMES**

**NEW CONSTRUCTION**

**KEY**

● SMOKE ALARMS FOR MINIMUM PROTECTION

○ ADDITIONAL SMOKE ALARMS FOR ENHANCED COVERAGE

○ SMOKE ALARMS WITH INTERCONNECTED AC/DC

○ SMOKE ALARMS WITH INTERCONNECTED AC/DC AND SMOKE ALARMS

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## GENERAL LIMITATIONS OF SMOKE/CO ALARMS

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