

JANUARY 2023

FIRE & RESCUE HEALTHY NEWS

Brought to you by the South Heartland District Health Department

Resources:

If you are having difficulties after a call, talk to someone on your team that you trust about your concerns and struggles.

National Suicide
Prevention

Lifeline: 988

You can also call: 1-800-273-8255

FLU & COVID-19 Vaccines:

Plan to get a flu vaccine this winter. Visit the SHDHD website, under the "What We Do" Tab, find "Immunizations." Under "Seasonal Influenza (Flu)" there is a list of local places to get your flu shot.

To get a COVID-19 vaccine or booster. Visit southheartlandhealth.ne.gov, click on the COVID-19 under "Hot Topics," you can search for COVID-19 vaccine clinics in your area.

Responding to a Carbon Monoxide emergency

Carbon Monoxide is associated with about 500 unintentional non-fire-related deaths each year. About 60 percent of these deaths are from motor vehicle exhaust, and about 40 percent are associated with consumer products. CO in its pure form is colorless and odorless; however, other gases that do have an odor often accompany it.

Entering the residence

If residents are inside the house, follow your local procedures for safe entry before determining the condition of the residents. If no local safe entry procedures for a CO incident exist then:

- Have a SCBA-equipped responder and ready for use.
- Use a CO meter and record a reading standing in the doorway of the home.
- Make sure you continue to be properly protected until safe CO levels are attained. CO monitor with each group of responders. Leave windows and doors open or closed (just as you found them).
- Take all residents outside. Occupants should remain outside until you have inspected conditions inside the home and authorized re-entry.
- Assess condition of all the residents.

Make sure to don proper safety equipment so that you do not become one of the victims to potential CO poisoning.

Determining level of care for residents

Once residents are outside of the house, find out the following information:

- Are any members of the household feeling ill?
- Are they experiencing any of the following symptoms?
 - Headache
 - Nausea
 - Dizziness
 - Shortness of Breath
 - Chest Pains
 - Confusion

Identify potential sources of elevated CO in home

Potential sources of CO include: automobiles, motorcycles, trucks, golf carts, RV's, gasoline, propane, diesel-fueled appliances, lawn mowers, power generators, furnaces, water heaters, clothes dryers, natural gas or propane refrigerators, ranges, ovens, space heaters, fireplaces, gas logs, wood and coal stoves, charcoal or gas grills, kerosene heaters, wood stoves, and any other equipment or appliance that burns fuel.

Examine flues, vents, and chimneys for blockage by birds or other animals and/or their nests, or by debris such as chipped or cracked masonry.

Visit the [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website](http://www.safercar.gov) for more guidelines for fire and other emergency response personnel regarding residential carbon monoxide incidents.



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Thank you for your constant service to your communities!



FIRE & RESCUE

FIRE & RESCUE HEALTHY NEWS CONTINUED

Carbon Monoxide Incidents: Guidelines for Dispatchers

What is the caller's name, address, & telephone number?

Is anyone unconscious, nauseous, lightheaded, having headaches, having chest pains?

Send ambulance and

Yes

No

Is a CO alarm sounding?

Yes

Don't Know

No

No Alarm

Send responder vehicle equipped with trained personnel and a professional CO meter.

Advise caller and all other residents to go outside or to a neighbor's home immediately. **DO NOT TAKE TIME TO VENTILATE THE HOME, UNLESS** someone is unconscious or cannot leave. Once outside, residents should not re-enter the home until response personnel have inspected the conditions inside the home and have authorized re-entry.

In extreme weather conditions and when neighbors are far away, advise residents they can stay in one room with a door or window open to the outside. There should not be any vehicles idling in the garage or any fuel-burning appliances operating in the room where the residents stay.

Advise caller to open all the windows in the room and to close any doors that go to other parts of the house. If there is an exhaust fan in the room, turn it on to help bring in fresh air more quickly.

Record caller's reasons to suspect CO incident and determine if CO investigation is needed. If so, then

***It is important that residents who show symptoms of CO poisoning be examined on the scene by EMS or appropriately trained personnel. If medical treatment is indicated, then the residents should be taken to the appropriate medical facility.**

Residents should not be allowed to drive themselves to a doctor's office or a hospital. Residents should not go back inside until you have inspected the conditions inside the home and authorized re-entry.