When carbon monoxide is silent, every home needs a voice

Let Safety be Heard

What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible gas that can cause serious illness or death within minutes. It is colourless, odourless and tasteless, meaning you cannot see, smell or taste it. Only working CO alarms can detect it.

Common Sources of Carbon Monoxide

1. Furnace
2. Water Heater
3. Fuel-Burning Dryer
4. Car
5. BBQ
6. Fuel-Burning Stove
7. Fireplace
8. Blocked Vents or Chimneys
9. Portable Fuel-Fired Generator

Smoke Alarm

Carbon Monoxide Alarm

Where Does CO Come From?

CO is produced when fuels like natural gas, propane, oil, wood, or charcoal burn incompletely. Have all fuel-burning appliances inspected annually by a qualified technician. Common sources in your home include:

Fuel-burning Appliances: Furnaces, fireplaces, water heaters, boilers, and stoves

Home Features: Attached garages

Outdoor Equipment: BBQs, generators, and propane heaters

Never use these indoors

How Does CO Enter Living Spaces?

Even when your appliances are working, CO can build up due to:

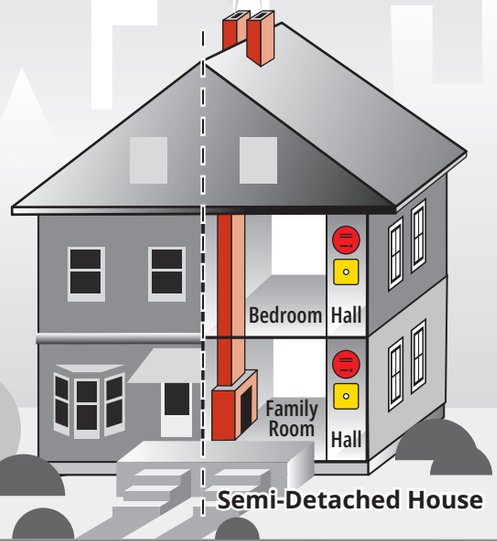
Blocked Passages: Clogged chimneys or vents (snow, nests, dryer lint, debris)

Structural Changes: Recent renovations can create air-pressure changes that affect airflow and how combustion appliances vent gases

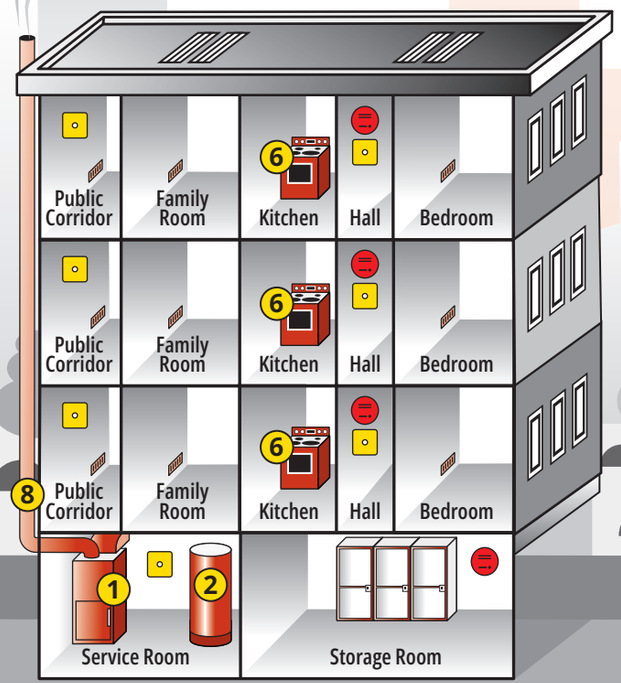
Improper Ventilation: Damaged flues or poor exhaust systems. Have all chimneys and vents inspected annually by a qualified technician

The Bottom Line:
CO alarms are required by law.

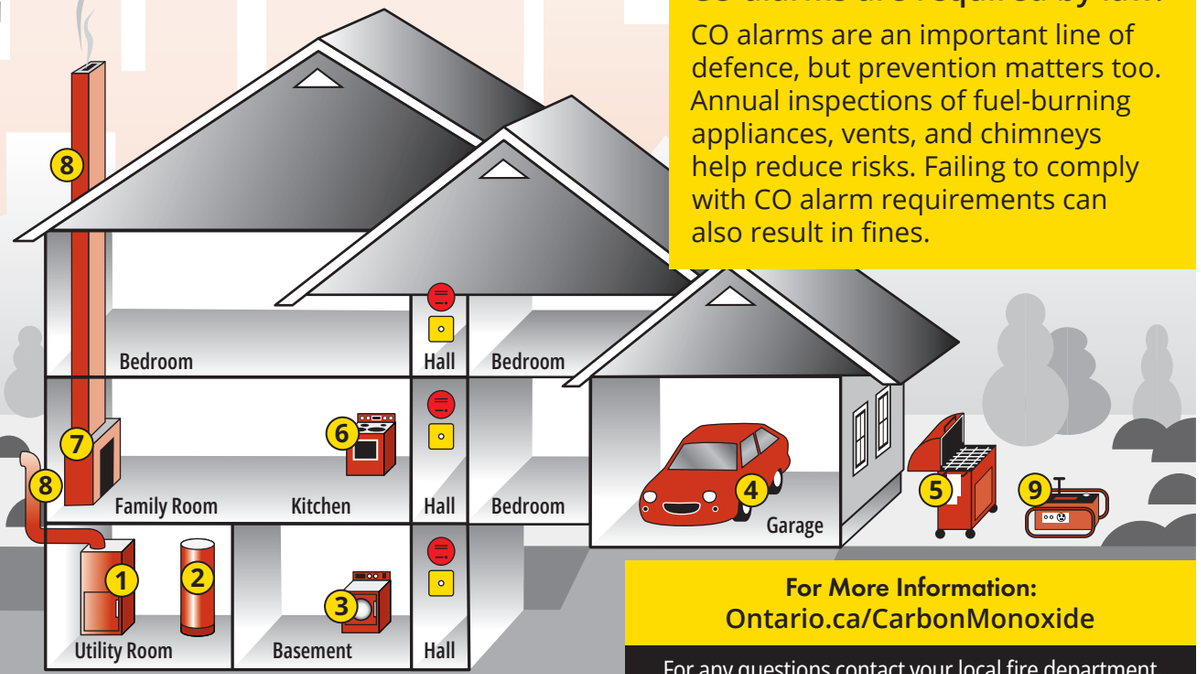
CO alarms are an important line of defence, but prevention matters too. Annual inspections of fuel-burning appliances, vents, and chimneys help reduce risks. Failing to comply with CO alarm requirements can also result in fines.



Semi-Detached House



Multi-Unit Building



Single-Family Detached House

For More Information:
Ontario.ca/CarbonMonoxide

For any questions contact your local fire department.

Follow Us: @ONFireMarshal

Where Does Your Home Need a Voice?

Laws for Existing Houses

Includes Detached or Semi-detached Houses, Townhouses, and Cottages.

Houses require CO alarms if they contain any of the following:

- A fuel-burning appliance
- A fireplace
- An attached garage
- Direct heat by forced-air from fuel-burning appliance

Where: CO alarms must be installed next to each sleeping area and on each storey without a sleeping area.

Who is responsible: Homeowners in owner-occupied homes and landlords in rental homes are responsible for installing, maintaining, and ensuring required CO alarms are in working order.

Laws for Existing Multi-Unit Buildings

Includes Apartment Buildings, Condos, Retirement Homes, Boarding Houses, and Hotels.

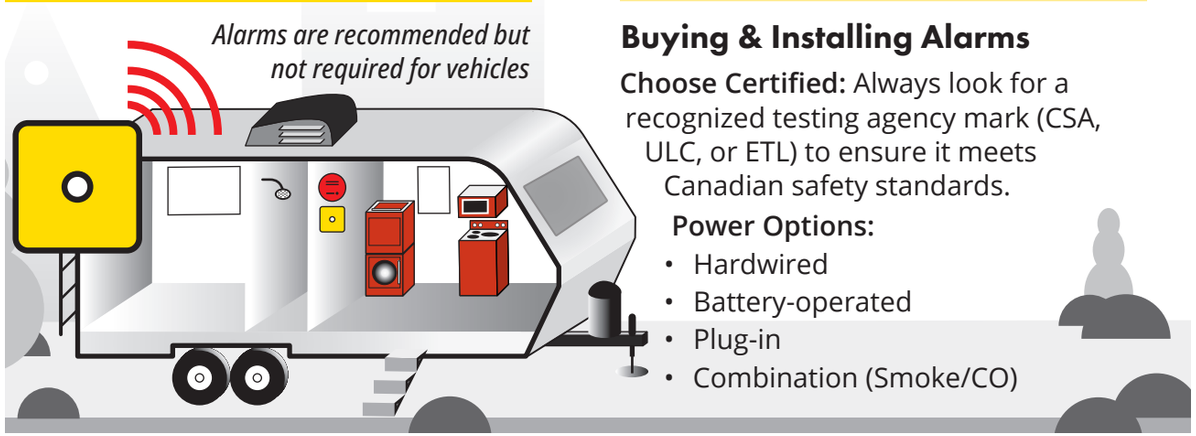
CO alarms must be installed inside suites containing a fuel burning appliance or fireplace, or suites next to (above, below, beside) service rooms or garages.

Where: CO alarms must be installed next to each sleeping area and on each storey without a sleeping area in a suite.

Service rooms with fuel burning appliances must have alarms. Fuel-burning appliances in other areas, including public corridors of the building must have alarms in the area.

Who is responsible: Building owners/operators, management and landlords are responsible for installing and maintaining required CO alarms. Tenants are responsible for reporting alarms that are not working.

CO Alarms are Essential for Your Safety



Buying & Installing Alarms

Choose Certified: Always look for a recognized testing agency mark (CSA, ULC, or ETL) to ensure it meets Canadian safety standards.

Power Options:

- Hardwired
- Battery-operated
- Plug-in
- Combination (Smoke/CO)

☑ Safety Checklist

Alarms

Protect Your Home

- ☐ Place a certified CO alarm outside **every sleeping area** and on **every storey** of your home.
- ☐ Ensure all your devices have a CSA, ULC, or ETL mark

Maintain Your Alarms

- ☐ Press the test button every month to ensure the alarms are working
- ☐ Replace batteries at least once a year or as soon as the low-battery chirp sounds
- ☐ CO sensors wear out. Replace the entire unit every **5–10 years** (check the "replace by" date on the back)

Know the Signs

- ☐ Do you know the difference between a **low-battery chirp** (1 beep) and an **emergency alarm** (4 beeps)? Read the manual for your alarm to learn about alarm signals and what they mean

Take Immediate Action

- ☐ If the alarm sounds, **get everyone outside** into fresh air immediately
- ☐ Once safe, call 911 or your local fire department
- ☐ Tell emergency responders if anyone is experiencing flu-like symptoms (headaches, nausea, or dizziness)

Appliances

Professional Maintenance

- ☐ Ensure your fuel-burning appliances are working properly and are not producing CO. Only use licensed contractors for installation and annual servicing of all gas or fuel-fired appliances
- ☐ If you've upgraded windows, insulation, or exhaust fans, have a qualified person check that airflow changes are not affecting how fuel-burning appliances vent, which could increase the risk of CO entering the home

Daily Care & Airflow

- ☐ Keep the space around furnaces and water heaters clutter-free to ensure proper airflow
- ☐ Regularly inspect outdoor vents, flues, and chimneys. Clear away **snow, ice, bird nests, leaves, and debris** that can trap gas inside
- ☐ Remove vehicles from attached garages immediately after starting

The "Never" List

- ☐ Never keep or use BBQs, camp stoves, propane heaters, and generators indoors. Using them in a garage, basement, or near a window can be fatal
- ☐ Never unplug or disconnect your alarm
- ☐ Never ignore the signal from your alarm