

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

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According to the National Safety Council, 200 300 people die each year as a result of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and thousands of others end up in hospital emergency rooms.

Since CO is a common industrial hazard resulting from the incomplete burning of materials containing carbon such as natural gas, gasoline, kerosene, oil, propane, coal or wood it is extremely important to have effective ventilation systems, maintain equipment in good working order, switch from gasoline-powered equipment where possible and prohibit the use of gasoline powered engines or tools in poorly ventilated areas.

As we approach winter and button up the workplace, the risk of higher levels of CO may exist that may not have been a problem during the warmer months when all the doors and windows were open. You need to be aware of this potential hazard, because of the changed conditions (doors and windows closed), and may need to adjust your work practices accordingly.

If the potential exposure to CO exists you may want to consider providing personal CO monitors with audible alarms or install area CO monitors with audible alarms and test air regularly. CO detectors should only be used as a backup safeguard and not as a replacement for proper use and maintenance of your fuel burning equipment.