

When a change of occupant occurs in all one and two family homes and some condominium units by sale or rental, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and a 2A 10BC fire extinguisher are required.

Why should my home have smoke alarms?

In the event of a fire, a smoke alarm can save your life and those of your loved ones. They are the single most important means of preventing house and apartment fire fatalities by providing an early warning signal.

Where do I put them?

Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement. Many fatal fires begin late at night or in the early morning. For extra safety, install smoke alarms both inside and outside the sleeping area.

Also, smoke alarms should be installed on the ceiling or 6 to 12 inches below the ceiling on side walls. Since smoke and many deadly gases rise, installing your smoke alarms at the proper level will provide you with the earliest warning possible. Always follow the manufacturer's installation instructions.

To avoid false alarms and/or improper operation, avoid installation of smoke detectors in the following areas:

Kitchens: smoke from cooking may cause a nuisance alarm.

Bathrooms: excessive steam from a shower may cause a nuisance alarm.

Forced air ducts used for heating or air conditioning or paddle fans: air movement may prevent smoke from reaching detectors.

Near furnaces of any type: air and dust movement and normal combustion products may cause a nuisance alarm.

The "Dead Air" space where the ceiling meets the wall.

The peak of an "A" frame type of ceiling "Dead Air" at the top may prevent smoke from reaching the detector.

What if the alarm goes off while I'm cooking?

Then it's doing its job. Do not disable your smoke alarm if it alarms due to cooking or other non-fire causes. You may not remember to put the batteries back in the alarm after

cooking. Instead, clear the air by waving a towel near the alarm, leaving the batteries in place. The alarm may have to be moved to a new location.

Are smoke alarms hard to install?

In most cases, all you will need is a screwdriver. Many brands are self-adhesive and will automatically stick to the wall or ceiling where they are placed. However, be sure to follow the directions from the manufacturer because each brand is different

How do I keep my smoke alarms working?

Smoke alarms are very easy to take care of. Keep them clean of dust and debris. Never paint over a smoke detector. Change the batteries at least once a year, however it is recommended that you change them every time you adjust your clocks for daylight savings time. Some smoke alarms are considered to be "hard wired." This means they are connected to the household electrical system and may or may not have battery back-up. It's important to test every smoke alarm monthly. And always use new batteries when replacing old ones.

How long will my smoke alarm last?

About eight-to-ten years, after which it should be replaced. Like most electrical devices, smoke alarms wear out. You may want to write the purchase date with a marker on the inside of your unit. That way, you'll know when to replace it. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for replacement.

Carbon Monoxide

This "silent killer" has no smell. What's more, it has no taste or color.

WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE?

Carbon monoxide is produced by burning any fuel. Therefore, any fuel-burning appliance in your home is a potential CO source.

When appliances are kept in good working condition, they produce little CO. Improperly operating appliances can produce fatal CO concentrations in your home. Likewise, using charcoal indoors or running a car in a garage can cause CO poisoning.

SOURCES OF CARBON MONOXIDE

- 1). Room Heater
- 2). Furnace
- 3). Charcoal grill
- 4). Range
- 5). Water Heater
- 6). Auto in closed garage
- 7). Fireplace

Carbon-Monoxide Detectors

Carbon monoxide mimics the behavior of oxygen while withholding oxygen's benefits.

Like oxygen, CO combines with blood hemoglobin in the lungs, and from there it's transported throughout the body, not to feed but to starve the tissues. At relatively low levels it can cause headache, dizziness, nausea, blurred vision, chest pain, and fainting.

These symptoms are often mistaken for common ailments like the flu. Continued exposure to high CO levels can bring on unconsciousness, brain damage, and death.

If you have a fuel-burning furnace, appliance, or fireplace, you should have at least one CO detector, ideally in a hallway or sleeping area. Follow the manufacturer's installation instructions to locate your detector.

The Fire Marshal advises that you look for a model with a full-range digital readout that constantly reports the CO level. An occasional glance will give you an idea of the CO levels in your home--and if the alarm sounds you can tell at once how serious the threat is.

Most people don't need to worry much about plug-in detectors leaving them unprotected during a power outage. If the power goes off, so will their gas- or oil-fired furnaces, removing the major sources of Carbon Monoxide. However, if you heat with wood, it's a good idea to have a detector with a battery backup or a battery-powered detector that will keep going through a blackout.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Make sure appliances are installed according to manufacturer's instructions and local building codes. Most appliances should be installed by professionals.

Have the heating system (including chimneys and vents) inspected and serviced annually.

Follow manufacturer's directions for safe operation.

Examine vents and chimneys regularly for improper connections, visible rust or stains.

Notice problems that could indicate improper appliance operation:

Decreasing hot water supply
Furnace unable to heat house or runs constantly
Sooting, especially on appliances
Unfamiliar or burning odor

INSTALL A CO DETECTOR FOR ADDED SAFETY (Must meet the requirements of UL 2034)

WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

Never burn charcoal indoors or in a garage. Never service appliances without proper knowledge, skills, and tools.

Never use the gas range or oven for heating.

Never leave a car running in a garage.

Never operate unvented gas-burning appliances in a closed room.

***The Township of West Milford* has an ordinance prohibiting the use of kerosene heaters as a primary source of heat in any residence.**

SYMPTOMS OF CO POISONING

Carbon monoxide poisoning can kill you.

The initial symptoms of CO are similar to the flu (but without the fever). They include:

Dizziness
Fatigue
Headache
Nausea
Irregular breathing

Remember, if you have any of these symptoms and if you feel better when you go outside your home and the symptoms reappear once you're back inside, you may have CO poisoning.

What is carbon monoxide?

- Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless and toxic gas. Because it is impossible to see, taste or smell the toxic fumes, CO can kill you before you are aware it is in your home. At lower levels of exposure, CO causes mild effects that are often mistaken for the flu. These symptoms include

headaches, dizziness, disorientation, nausea and fatigue. The effects of CO exposure can vary greatly from person to person depending on age, overall health and the concentration and length of exposure.

Where does carbon monoxide come from?

- CO gas can come from several sources: gas-fired appliances, charcoal grills, wood-burning furnaces or fireplaces and motor vehicles.

Who is at risk?

- Everyone is at risk for CO poisoning. Medical experts believe that unborn babies, infants, children, senior citizens and people with heart or lung problems are at even greater risk for CO poisoning.

WHAT ACTIONS DO I TAKE IF MY CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM GOES OFF?

What you need to do if your carbon monoxide alarm goes off depends on whether anyone is feeling ill or not.

If no one is feeling ill:

1. Silence the alarm.
2. Turn off all appliances and sources of combustion (i.e. furnace and fireplace).
3. Ventilate the house with fresh air by opening doors and windows.
4. Call a qualified professional to investigate the source of the possible CO buildup.

If illness is a factor:

1. Evacuate all occupants immediately.
2. Determine how many occupants are ill and determine their symptoms.
3. Call your local emergency number and when relaying information to the dispatcher, include the number of people feeling ill.
4. Do not re-enter the home without the approval of a fire department representative.
5. Call a qualified professional to repair the source of the CO.

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM CO POISONING

- Install at least one UL (Underwriters Laboratories) listed carbon monoxide alarm with an audible warning signal near the sleeping areas and outside individual bedrooms. Carbon monoxide alarms measure levels of CO over time and are

designed to sound an alarm before an average, healthy adult would experience symptoms. It is very possible that you may not be experiencing symptoms when you hear the alarm. This does not mean that CO is not present.

- Have a qualified professional check all fuel burning appliances, furnaces, venting and chimney systems at least once a year.
- Never use your range or oven to help heat your home and never use a charcoal grill or hibachi in your home or garage.
- Never keep a car running in a garage. Even if the garage doors are open, normal circulation will not provide enough fresh air to reliably prevent a dangerous buildup of CO.
- When purchasing an existing home, have a qualified technician evaluate the integrity of the heating and cooking systems, as well as the sealed spaces between the garage and house. The presence of a carbon monoxide alarm in your home can save your life in the event of CO buildup.

Home Safety

Prevent Electrical Fires

Never overload circuits or extension cords. Do not place cords and wires under rugs, over nails or in high traffic areas. Immediately shut off and unplug appliances that sputter, spark or emit an unusual smell. Have them professionally repaired or replaced.

If an appliance has a three-prong plug, use it only in a three-slot outlet. Never force it to fit into a two-slot outlet or extension cord.

Use safety closures to "child-proof" electrical outlets.

Alternate Heaters

- Portable heaters need their space. Keep anything combustible at least three feet away.
- Keep fire in the fireplace. Use fire screens and have your chimney cleaned annually. The creosote buildup can ignite a chimney fire that could easily spread.

Plan Your Escape

Practice an escape plan from every room in the house. Caution everyone to stay low to the floor when escaping from fire and never to open doors that are hot. Select a location where everyone can meet after escaping the house. Get out then call for help.

WinterTips

Winter is the time winter sports such as sledding, skiing, and also ice-skating. However, temperatures are not always cold enough to freeze lakes and ponds thoroughly. We can have fun playing on the ice as long as we follow safety rules:

- Never skate alone - always use the buddy system
 - Know how to call for help
- Have an adult make sure the ice is at least 4 inches thick or check with fire department before you go skating on a pond
 - Stay away from open water
- Don't take short cuts across ice-covered ponds, swamps and streams
 - Remember "THINK BEFORE YOU SINK!!!!!"

Preventing Holiday Tree Fires

- **Holiday Tree Fire Hazards** - Movie segments demonstrating how fast a live Christmas tree can become fully engulfed in flames. Special fire safety precautions need to be taken when keeping a live tree in the house. A burning tree can rapidly fill a room with fire and deadly gases.
- **Selecting a Tree for the Holiday**
Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needle should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.
- **Caring for Your Tree**
Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.
- **Disposing of Your Tree**
Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or woodburning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by

taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away by a community pick-up service.

Holiday Lights

- **Maintain Your Holiday Lights**
Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.
- **Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets**
Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires - they should not be warm to the touch.
- **Do Not Leave Holiday Lights on Unattended**

Holiday Decorations

- **Use Only Nonflammable Decorations**
All decorations should be nonflammable or flame-retardant and placed away from heat vents.
- **Never Put Wrapping Paper in a Fireplace**
It can throw off dangerous sparks and produce a chemical buildup in the home that could cause an explosion.
- **Artificial Holiday Trees**
If you are using a metallic or artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.

Candle Care

- **Avoid Using Lit Candles**
If you do use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave the house with candles burning.
- **Never Put Lit Candles on a Tree**
Do not go near a holiday tree with an open flame - candles, lighters or matches.

Escape Plans

- **Practice Escaping From Every Room In The Home**

Practice escape plans every month. The best plans have two ways to get out of each room. If the primary way is blocked by fire or smoke, you will need a second

way out. A secondary route might be a window onto an adjacent roof or using an Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) approved collapsible ladder for escape from upper story windows. Make sure that windows are not stuck, screens can be taken out quickly and that security bars can be properly opened. Also, practice feeling your way out of the house in the dark or with your eyes closed.

- **[Security Bars Require Special Precautions](#)**

Security bars may help to keep your family safe from intruders, but they can also trap you in a deadly fire! Windows and doors with security bars must have quick release devices to allow them to be opened immediately in an emergency. Make sure everyone in the family understands and practices how to properly operate and open locked or barred doors and windows.

- **Immediately Leave The Home**

When a fire occurs, do not waste any time saving property. Take the safest exit route, but if you must escape through smoke, remember to crawl low, under the smoke and keep your mouth covered. The smoke contains toxic gases which can disorient you or, at worst, overcome you.

- **Never Open Doors That Are Hot To The Touch**

When you come to a closed door, use the back of your hand to feel the top of the door, the doorknob, and the crack between the door and door frame to make sure that fire is not on the other side. If it feels hot, use your secondary escape route. Even if the door feels cool, open it carefully. Brace your shoulder against the door and open it slowly. If heat and smoke come in, slam the door and make sure it is securely closed, then use your alternate escape route.

- **Designate A Meeting Place Outside and Take Attendance**

Designate a meeting location away from the home, but not necessarily across the street. For example, meet under a specific tree or at the end of the driveway or front sidewalk to make sure everyone has gotten out safely and no one will be hurt looking for someone who is already safe. Designate one person to go to a neighbor's home to phone the fire department.

- **Once Out, Stay Out**

Remember to escape first, then notify the fire department using the 911 system or proper local emergency number in your area. Never go back into a burning building for any reason. Teach children not to hide from firefighters. If someone is missing, tell the firefighters. They are equipped to perform rescues safely.

Summer Tips:

When changing seats, stay low and near center line of a small boat.

Be ready for trouble when a powerboat passes you in a narrow channel.

As the lead boat (which always has the right of way) stay on your side of the channel and maintain a steady speed so that the overtaking vessel can pass you safely. Use your radio to discuss this with the passing boat.

Anchor from bow, not stern.

Use anchor line length at least five times longer than water depth.

Take a safe boating course.

As an extra benefit, you may earn lower boat insurance costs.

Never Drink and Drive. **Effective May 27, 2004:** A person with a blood alcohol level (B.A.C.) of 0.08% or greater who operates a vessel/boat is considered to be driving under the influence. The penalties for operating a boat while drunk can be quite severe so think before you drink.
http://www.state.nj.us/mvc/cit_violations/d_vp_oui.html

wear a Coast Guard approved Personal Floatation device (PFD) that fits well; make sure it is the proper type and approved for your specific usage.