



PETALUMA FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU
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PETALUMA, CA - A new state law will go into effect beginning July 1, 2011 for all existing homes and dwelling units to install Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detectors.

Every owner of a "dwelling unit intended for human occupancy" must install an approved carbon monoxide device in each existing dwelling unit having a fossil fuel burning heater or appliance, fireplace, or an attached garage. All landlords of dwelling units must install carbon monoxide detectors. But you don't need to wait until July 1st to begin protecting your family.

Carbon monoxide poisoning has been noted as the leading cause of accidental poisoning death in the United States. High concentrations of CO, a colorless, odorless gas that is produced when fossil fuel is incompletely burned, can cause cognitive impairment, loss of consciousness, coma, and often death. Placement of a carbon monoxide (CO) detector is important. If you are installing only one carbon monoxide detector, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recommends it be located near the sleeping area, where it can wake you if you are asleep. Also, additional detectors are recommended on every level and in every bedroom of a home to provide extra protection against carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide is formed when carbon-based fuels, such as kerosene, gasoline, propane, natural gas, oil, charcoal or wood, are burned with inadequate amounts of oxygen, creating a condition known as incomplete combustion. In the case of home gas appliances, this can be caused by improper installation, poor maintenance, appliance misuse or failure. Items such as; gas space heaters, leaking chimneys and furnaces, automobile exhaust from attached garages, gas water heaters, gas ranges, wood stoves and fireplaces are to name a few culprits that could create carbon monoxide.

A relatively inexpensive device similar to a smoke alarm, a CO detector signals detection of carbon monoxide in the air. Under the law, a carbon monoxide device is "designed to detect carbon monoxide and produce a distinct audible alarm". It can be battery powered, a plug-in device with battery backup, or installed into the alternating current power line of the dwelling unit with a secondary battery backup. If the carbon monoxide device is combined with a smoke alarm, it must emit an alarm or voice warning in a manner that clearly differentiates between a carbon monoxide detector warning and a smoke alarm warning.

Bottom line: install a Carbon Monoxide Detector now to prevent a CO incident later.

For more information contact your local fire agency or visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/co/faqs.htm>
<http://www.firstalert.com/faqs/co-alarm>
<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/466.html>
<http://www.epa.gov>

CA Legislative summary and analysis:

http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/09-10/bill/sen/sb_01510200/sb_183_cfa_20090526_141751_sen_floor.html