



# RENTON REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY

WORKING TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITY SAFER, HEALTHIER, AND STRONGER

***It's a new year and time for a fresh start when it comes to fire safety! Resolve to spending just a few minutes reviewing the included winter safety information to make sure you start your new year off safely.***

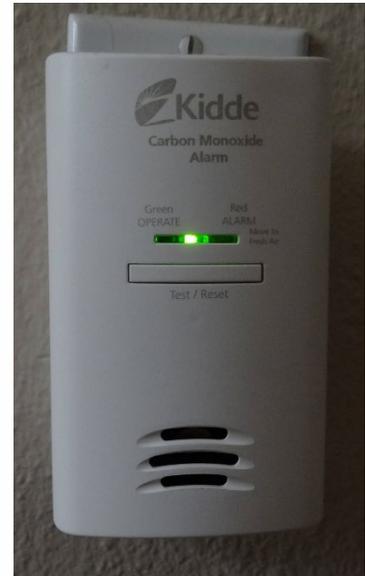
## **Understanding Carbon Monoxide Poisoning:**

Carbon monoxide, or CO is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death. CO is produced by burning gasoline, wood, propane, charcoal, or other fuel. Improperly ventilated appliances and engines, particularly in a tightly sealed or enclosed space, may allow carbon monoxide to accumulate to dangerous levels.

### **Poisoning Signs:**

The most common symptoms of CO are *headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion*. Poisoning occurs when carbon monoxide builds up in your bloodstream. When too much carbon monoxide is in the air, your body replaces the oxygen in your red blood cells with carbon monoxide. This can lead to serious tissue damage, or even death. Consider these prevention tips.

- **Install carbon monoxide detectors.** Put one in the hallway near each sleeping area in your house. Check the batteries every time you check your smoke detector batteries. If the alarm sounds, leave the house and call 911 or the fire department. Carbon monoxide detectors are also available for motor homes and boats.
- **Open the garage door before starting your car.** Never leave your car running in your garage. Be particularly cautious if you have an attached garage. Leaving your car running in a space attached to the rest of your house is never safe, even with the garage door open.
- **Make repairs before returning to the site of an incident.** If carbon monoxide poisoning has occurred in your home, it's critical to find and repair the source of the carbon monoxide before you stay there again.



## **Generator Safety:**

When using portable generators please, for the safety of you, your family and pets follow these guidelines: Use portable generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas at least 5' away from all doors, windows and vents.

- Make sure you have working carbon monoxide alarms in your home.
- Do not use a generator in a wet area. This can cause shock or electrocution.



- Turn off generators and let them cool down before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is hot.
- Store fuel in a container that is intended for the purpose and is correctly labeled as being for fuel. These containers should be stored outdoors.

## Electric Portable Space Heater Safety

When the weather turns cold, it can bring a chill into our homes. Portable space heaters have become a popular way to supplement central heating or to heat one room. If you plan to use portable electric space heaters, make sure to follow these tips and recommendations.

- Purchase a heater with the seal of a qualified testing laboratory.
- Keep the heater at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn, including people.
- Choose a heater with a thermostat and overheat protection.
- Place the heater on a solid, flat surface.
- Make sure your heater has an auto shut-off to turn the heater off should it tip over.
- Keep space heaters out of the way of foot traffic. Never block an exit.
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use an extension cord.
- Space heaters should be turned off and unplugged when you leave the room or go to bed.



## Wood and Pellet Stove Safety

As the temperature drops outside, wood and pellet stoves may be fired up inside the home. What you may not realize is that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fires during the winter months.

- Have a qualified professional install stove, chimney connectors, and chimneys.
- Stoves should have the label of an independent testing laboratory.
- In wood stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood. In pellet stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood pellets.
- Have your chimney and stove inspected and cleaned by a certified chimney sweep every fall just before heating season.
- Clean the inside of your stove periodically using a wire brush.
- Allow ashes to cool before disposing of them. Place the ashes in a covered metal container. Keep the container at least 10 feet away from the home and other buildings.



- Keep a close eye on children whenever a wood or pellet stove is being used. Remind them to stay at least 3 feet away from the stove.
- Stoves need space. Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from the stove.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms (CO) outside each sleeping area

**Happy New Year!**