

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas often formed in the process of incomplete combustion of organic substances, including fuels. It is dangerous because it interferes with normal oxygen uptake for humans and other living organisms needing oxygen to live. CO is a gas that can build up to dangerous concentrations indoors when fuel-burning devices are not properly vented, operated, or maintained. Because it has no odor, color or taste, CO cannot be detected by our senses. Fortunately, simple measures can be taken to prevent CO problems. One such action is the installation of a CO alarm to detect potentially deadly conditions.

Minnesota State Law requires that homes have at least one operational CO alarm within 10 feet of every room legally used for sleeping (see Minnesota Statute, 299F.50). Follow the manufacturer's instructions for placement of your CO alarm and also note the suggested replacement date (typically 5 – 7 years).

General Location Requirements:

- Within 10 (10) feet of each room lawfully used for sleeping purposes. Installed per manufacturer's instructions.

Listing or Certification of Detectors:

- All CO alarms shall be certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory to conform to the latest Underwriters Laboratory (UL) Standards (also known as UL2034 Standards).

Owner Responsibilities in Multifamily Dwellings:

- It shall be the owner's responsibility of a multifamily dwelling that is required to be equipped with carbon monoxide alarms to:
 - (1) Provide and install one approved and operational carbon monoxide alarm within ten (10) feet of each room lawfully used for sleeping; and
 - (2) Replace any required carbon monoxide alarm that has been stolen, removed, found missing, or rendered inoperable during a prior occupancy of the dwelling unit and which has not been replaced by the occupant prior to the commencement of a new occupancy of a dwelling unit.

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Power:

- CO alarms must either be hardwired into the electrical wiring, directly plugged into an electrical outlet without a switch, or battery powered.

Battery Removal and Tampering Prohibited:

- No person shall remove batteries from, or in any way render inoperable, a required carbon monoxide alarm.

Exceptions for Certain Multifamily Dwellings:

- Multifamily dwellings may have approved and operational carbon monoxide alarms installed between 15 and 25 feet of carbon monoxide producing central fixtures and equipment provided there is a centralized, monitored fire/CO alarm system (Required for all building with 5 or more units).
- An owner of a multifamily dwelling that contains minimal or no sources of carbon monoxide may be exempted from the requirements provided that such owner certifies to the commissioner of public safety that such multifamily dwelling poses no foreseeable carbon monoxide risk to the health and safety to the dwelling units.

If you have questions regarding this information please contact:

North St. Paul Fire Department

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