

# Carbon monoxide gas is dangerous!

Carbon monoxide poisoning can cause brain damage and death.

- Carbon monoxide gas is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States.
- Carbon monoxide gas is produced by common household fuel-burning appliances. When not properly vented, poison gas from these appliances can build up in a room or building.
- Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning such as headaches, nausea, and fatigue are often not connected to carbon monoxide as the deadly gas builds up undetected.

A carbon monoxide detector/ alarm is a device that will detect the presence of carbon monoxide (CO) and sounds an alarm to give people in the area a chance to safely leave the building. CO detectors/ alarms by themselves are not smoke detectors, and vice versa.

However, there are combination smoke/ CO devices. CO detectors/ alarms are usually plugged into a wall electrical outlet or wired directly into a building's electrical system.



Owners of multi-unit residential buildings which contain fuel-burning appliances shall install carbon monoxide (CO) detectors/ alarms.\*

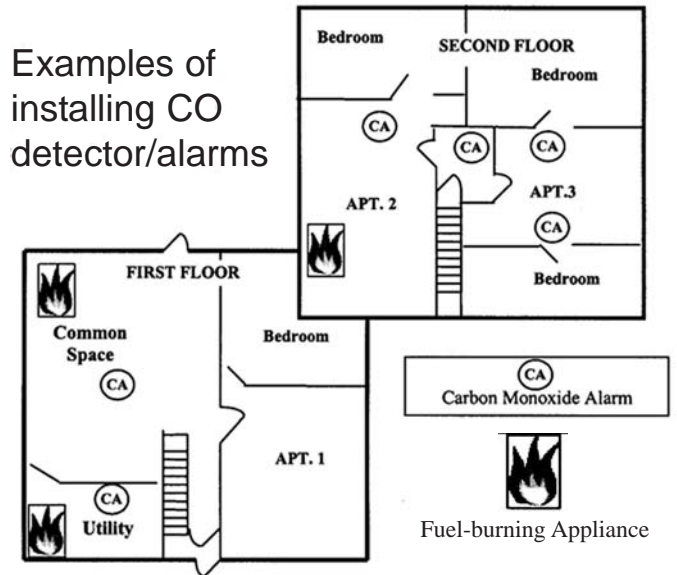
Examples of fuel-burning appliances: Stoves, ovens, grills, clothes dryers, furnaces, boilers, water heaters, heaters, and fireplaces.

- Where must the detector/alarms be placed?**
1. In the basement of the building if the basement has a fuel-burning appliance;
  2. Within 15 feet of each sleeping area of a unit that has a fuel-burning appliance;
  3. Within 15 feet of each sleeping area of a unit that is immediately adjacent to a unit that has a fuel-burning appliance;
  4. In each room not used as a sleeping area that has a fuel-burning appliance, a CO detector/ alarm shall be installed not more than 75 feet from the fuel-burning appliance;
  5. In each hallway leading from a unit that has a fuel-burning appliance, in a location that is within 75 feet from the unit. If there is no electrical outlet within this distance, the CO detector/ alarm shall be placed at the closest available electrical outlet in the hallway. The 75-foot installation limit is measured from the door of the unit along the hallway.

## Sample floor plan of where to install CO detectors/alarms

- Utility room needs CO device within 75 feet of furnace. If device instructions require a minimum separation from the furnace greater than the room allows, the device should be outside the room.
- Common space needs CO device within 75 feet of fireplace.
- Apartment 1 does **not** need a CO device because it does not have a combustion appliance and it is not adjacent to a unit with a combustion appliance.
- Apartment 2 with a gas range needs a CO device within 15 feet of the bedroom.
- Apartment 3 needs CO devices within 15 feet of **each** bedroom because it is adjacent to apartment 2, which has a combustion appliance.
- Second floor corridor needs a CO device within 75 feet of door of apartment 2.

## Examples of installing CO detector/alarms



\*An exception to installation of CO detector/alarms: If the building is pre-October, 2008, CO detector/alarms are not needed if there is no enclosed attached garage and all fuel-burning devices are closed-combustion (do not release combustion air to the interior of the building). Those closed-combustion devices require annual inspections.

- There are separate regulations covering carbon monoxide detectors/alarms in **one- and two-family dwellings** in Wisconsin. There are also separate regulations covering **smoke detectors** in various types of buildings.
- Any carbon monoxide detector that bears an Underwriters Laboratories listing mark or similar mark from an independent product **safety certification** organization is acceptable for use in Wisconsin.
- Carbon monoxide detectors/alarms must be **installed according to the instructions** of the manufacturer of the device.
- The installation of CO detectors/alarms must be **throughout the entire building** where a portion of the building includes multi-unit residences.
- The installation of CO detector/alarms in **“adjacent units”** applies to units located on the same floor level.
- Violations of the CO regulations in Comm 62.1200 are subject to possible **penalties**. See s. 101.149 (8), Stats.

## Maintenance Requirements

The owner of a residential building must maintain carbon monoxide detectors / alarms according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

An occupant of a unit in a residential building may give the owner of the residential building written notice that a CO device is not functional or has been removed by a person other than the occupant. The owner of the residential building shall repair or replace the nonfunctional or missing device within five days after receipt of the notice.

## Electrical Supply

In new construction built since October 1, 2008, CO devices must be powered by the building electrical system and include a battery backup. Multiple alarms within one living unit must be interconnected. In pre-2008 buildings, detectors/alarms may just be battery-powered and interconnection is not required.

**Carbon monoxide detectors/alarms can be damaged by freezing temperatures.**

Carbon monoxide detector / alarm requirements for **tourist rooming houses** (commercial cabins) are found in Wisconsin’s Uniform Dwelling Code, Comm 21.095.

**Find a copy of this brochure online:** <http://dsps.wi.gov/SB/SB-COBrochure711.pdf>

S&B also has **one and two-family dwelling smoke alarm and CO detector/ alarm info** online: <http://dsps.wi.gov/sb/docs/SB-UdcAlarmsGeb11.pdf>

# Carbon monoxide alarms are needed in most multi-unit residential buildings in Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, if you have fuel-burning appliances in a multi-unit residential building (3 or more units), you must have carbon monoxide detectors/alarms.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas produced by incompletely burning fuel containing carbon. You can’t see it, smell it, or taste it; but carbon monoxide can kill.



A carbon monoxide detector/ alarm is a device that detects the presence of carbon monoxide and sounds an alarm to give people in the area a chance to safely leave the building.

What are some examples of multi-unit residential buildings subject to the requirement for detectors/alarms? They include public buildings used for sleeping or lodging, such as hotels, motels, condominiums, apartment buildings, dormitories, fraternities, sororities, convents, seminaries, jails, prisons, home shelters, and community-based residential facilities. Also included are tourist rooming houses (cabins) and bed and breakfast establishments. Hospitals and nursing homes are not included.



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