

New Carbon Monoxide Alarm Requirements

NEW CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM REQUIREMENTS

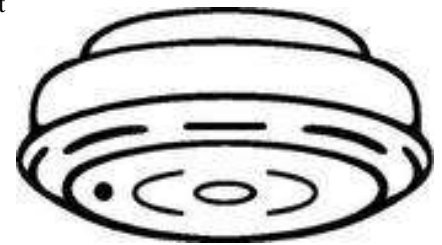
Effective July 1, 2011 a new law may help prevent senseless Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning in the home. CO is formed from the **incomplete** burning of any flame-fueled (i.e., not electric) device including ranges, ovens, clothes dryers, furnaces, fireplaces, grills, space heaters, vehicles, and water heaters. Carbon monoxide can be dangerous – when inhaled, it passes from the lungs into the hemoglobin molecules of red blood cells. The result is that the body becomes oxygen-starved, which can lead to tissue damage and death.

Many reported cases of carbon monoxide poisoning say that while victims are aware they are not well, they become so disoriented that they are not able to save themselves by leaving the building or calling for assistance. Carbon monoxide alarms are designed to alert residents before exposure to CO causes a health hazard.

Per California Senate Bill 183, beginning July 1, 2011, **all existing single family homes** must have carbon monoxide alarms. All other types of residences (apartments, condominiums, etc.) will need carbon monoxide alarms beginning January 1, 2013. The law does not designate local fire departments as enforcing agencies.

The new requirements apply if **ANY** of the following are present within the home:

- Attached garage
- Natural gas or propane furnace and/or
- Natural gas range and/or oven, or
- Gas or wood-burning fireplace.



For existing homes, the CO alarms may be battery powered. At a minimum, CO alarms are required:

- Outside of each sleeping area or bedroom **AND**
- On each level of the home

DID YOU KNOW

- Carbon monoxide is a tasteless, odorless, and invisible gas.
- Low levels of CO poisoning can cause shortness of breath, mild headaches, nausea, and fainting.

Carbon monoxide poisoning is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States according to the American Medical Association.

NEW CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS

Beginning January 1, 2011 the California Building Code has similar requirements for all new homes and for existing homes undergoing alterations and repairs requiring building permits. Further information about specific requirements is available as follows:

- For new homes or homes undergoing remodels, contact your local building department.
- For homes being sold or purchased, contact your real estate agent.
- For questions regarding an existing home or mobile/manufactured home, contact Shawn Huff of the State of California Housing and Community Development Department at (916) 327-2816.
- For a list of CO alarms currently approved by the Office of the State Fire Marshal, visit the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection website at <http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/strucfireengineer/pdf/bml/CSFM%20listed%20carbon%20monoxide%20devices.pdf>

