

This is Bottalim Chief Ed Lardiar from Humboldt Bay Fire Department and Coordinator for the Humboldt/Del Norte Haymat Response Team with today's Community Comment.

With winter upon us, I would like to share safety information on Carbon Monoxide. The Silent Killer.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas caused by incomplete combustion of fuels such as natural gas, propane, kerosene, gasoline, diesel, charcoal and wood. Normally, carbon monoxide is not an issue to our health. But during winter months, many of us use fuel burning appliances much more.

Mainly, appliances intended for outdoor use only, are used indoors for cooking, heating and light. Use of these appliances indoors can cause high levels of carbon monoxide build up in a very short time. Use of generators can cause excessive carbon monoxide build up if not used in a well ventilated location. Faulty stoves, furnaces and hot water heaters can also cause carbon monoxide build up. Warming up your vehicle in the garage is also a common source of carbon monoxide build up.

Low levels of carbon monoxide poisoning include flu like symptoms on mild exertion. Higher levels include dizziness, mental confusion, severe headaches, nausea & fainting.

Ultimately, carbon monoxide poisoning can cause brain damage & death.

Carbon monoxide alarms are now required in all homes and apartments. Carbon monoxide alarms are a simple and inexpensive method of detecting the presence of carbon monoxide in your home.

Carbon monoxide alarms can plug into outlets or be battery operated. As with smoke alarms, batteries should be changed every six months and tested to ensure proper operation.

If you suspect a build up of carbon monoxide, open doors and windows to ventilate your home.

Call 911, and go outside to fresh air. Contact your utility provider for evaluation of your appliances and an appliance repair professional.

If you have additional questions contact me @ Humboldt Bay Fire.

On another note, let's all do our part to protect the environment by properly disposing of hazardous waste. Instead of throwing paints, pesticides and other hazardous waste items into the trash, contact Humboldt Waste Management to schedule an appointment for proper disposal. Brent, Tiffany and their crew will be more than happy to assist you with collection and disposal.