



CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTION



CO

**A MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC
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INTRODUCTION

Vacation rental properties have become a popular choice for travelers looking for comfortable and affordable accommodation options. These properties range from apartments to homes and often provide more space and privacy than traditional hotel rooms.

However, vacation rental owners and managers have a significant responsibility to ensure the safety of their guests. One of the major safety concerns in vacation rentals is the presence of carbon monoxide, a highly toxic gas that can cause severe health problems or even death if not detected in time.


Carbon monoxide is a byproduct of incomplete combustion of fuels like gas, oil, wood, and charcoal. It is colorless, odorless, and tasteless, making it difficult to detect without the use of special equipment. Exposure to high levels of carbon monoxide can cause **headaches, dizziness, nausea**, and in severe cases, **unconsciousness** and **death**. This is why it is crucial for vacation rental owners and managers to take steps to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning in their properties.

Types of Carbon Monoxide Detectors


There are two main types of carbon monoxide detectors: **battery-operated** and **plug-in**. Battery-operated detectors are portable and can be placed anywhere in the home, while plug-in detectors must be plugged into a wall socket for 24/7 monitoring.

Both types of detectors use electrochemical sensors to detect CO levels in the air. These sensors are highly accurate in detecting the presence of carbon monoxide and will trigger an alarm if dangerous levels are detected. Both battery-operated and plug-in detectors can provide peace of mind and early warning of CO presence in a vacation rental property.

COMMON SOURCES OF CARBON MONOXIDE:




Furnaces and boilers: These heating systems can release carbon monoxide if they are not properly installed, maintained, or ventilated.




Stoves and ovens: Cooking with gas stoves or ovens can release carbon monoxide if they are not properly ventilated.



Cars and generators: Running cars or gasoline-powered generators in a closed space can result in carbon monoxide buildup.



Fireplaces and woodstoves: Burning wood or coal in fireplaces or woodstoves can release carbon monoxide if they are not properly ventilated.









Water heaters: Gas-powered water heaters can release carbon monoxide if they are not properly installed or maintained.

Carbon Monoxide Detection Verification Checklist

- Install a carbon monoxide detector on every floor as required by law in most states
- Have a professional or gas company check new or modified equipment for gas leaks or the presence of CO
- Install CO detectors in a central location near bedrooms if the property does not have a known source of CO producing appliances
- In properties with fuel-burning appliances, mount CO alarms outside of each separate sleeping area within 21 feet of any door, on every occupied level of the dwelling unit (including basements), and in all sleeping rooms and guest rooms containing installed fuel-burning appliances
- Locate detectors 3 - 5 feet above the floor and at least 15 - 20 feet away from gas powered sources
- Test detectors once a month, or as recommended by the manufacturer
- Replace batteries at least once a year
- If an alarm sounds, evacuate the building immediately
- Seek medical attention if anyone is experiencing symptoms of CO poisoning
- Regular maintenance to ensure proper functioning

DON'TS FOR CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTION:

-  Install detectors near any gas or fossil fuel area to avoid false CO detection
-  Install in humid or moist areas including bathrooms
-  Install in direct sunlight to avoid overheating
-  Install within reach of children to avoid tampering or damage
-  Install near windows or windy areas
-  Install behind doors, cabinets, curtains or other areas to prevent proper CO detection.

CONCLUSION

Carbon monoxide is a dangerous and lethal gas that can be produced by the incomplete combustion of fuels. It is important for vacation rental property owners to ensure the safety of their guests by installing carbon monoxide detectors on every floor and regularly checking and maintaining them. Adhering to the proper placement and usage of the detectors, as well as being aware of the common sources of carbon monoxide, can greatly reduce the risk of CO poisoning and save lives.