

Carbon Monoxide Still a Risk in Summer

Closed doors and windows in the winter make it easier for carbon monoxide (CO) to build up, potentially poisoning anyone nearby. But there are many ways CO can build up to dangerous levels that have nothing to do with heating season. Summer months have their own unique set of dangers, both for the citizens in the community and the first responders called to help.

CO is odorless, tasteless, and invisible, and causes symptoms similar to flu or heat stroke: nausea, dizziness, blurred vision, headaches, sleepiness, weakness, and eventually death if not properly and quickly treated. Sometimes it takes as little as 10-15 minutes of exposure before symptoms occur.

Summertime causes include being around any gas, charcoal, or wood combustion in an enclosed area or one where airflow is blocked somehow (i.e. dense vegetation or awnings). This can be sitting at the back of a powerboat, use of a grill in a tent, use of gas-powered equipment indoors, or sitting in a parked vehicle, or even sitting too near a campfire.