

CDC
CENTERS FOR
DISEASE CONTROL
AND PREVENTION

Health News

Facts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

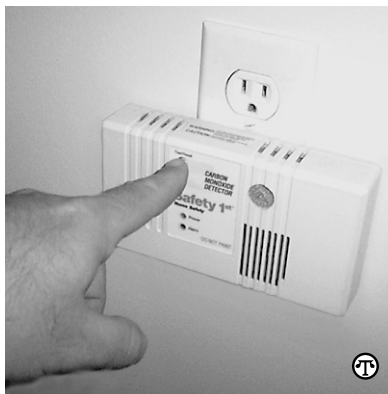
(NASPA)—The weather is turning colder and it's time to fire up the furnace for winter. Before you turn on that furnace or portable heater for the first time though, be aware of some important safety steps you need to take every year.

Any heater that burns gas, coal, kerosene, or charcoal can leak carbon monoxide. If a furnace or other appliance that burns one of these fuels is not vented properly, carbon monoxide can build up inside your home and cause illness and possibly death. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, invisible gas that kills more than 500 people every year in the United States. Inhaling carbon monoxide can cause headache, dizziness, weakness, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. High levels of carbon monoxide can cause a person to pass out and possibly die.

What you can do to protect yourself and your family

Follow these important steps to protect yourself and your family from the unseen danger of carbon monoxide:

- Install a working carbon monoxide detector in your house. Check the battery every time you check your smoke detector batteries.
- Every year have an expert inspect all of your appliances that burn fuel, such as your furnace,



gas water heater, or portable butane or kerosene heater.

- Never burn anything in an improperly vented stove or fireplace and never use a gas oven to heat your house. Such actions can cause carbon monoxide to build up.

- Do not run a gasoline-powered generator in an enclosed space (like your basement) or outside a window where its exhaust could blow into your home.

- Never run your car in the garage with the garage door closed. If your garage is attached to your house, close the door to the house any time you run your car in the garage, even when the garage door is open.

- When it snows this winter, clean snow and ice out of your car's tailpipe. A blocked tailpipe can cause exhaust to enter your car.