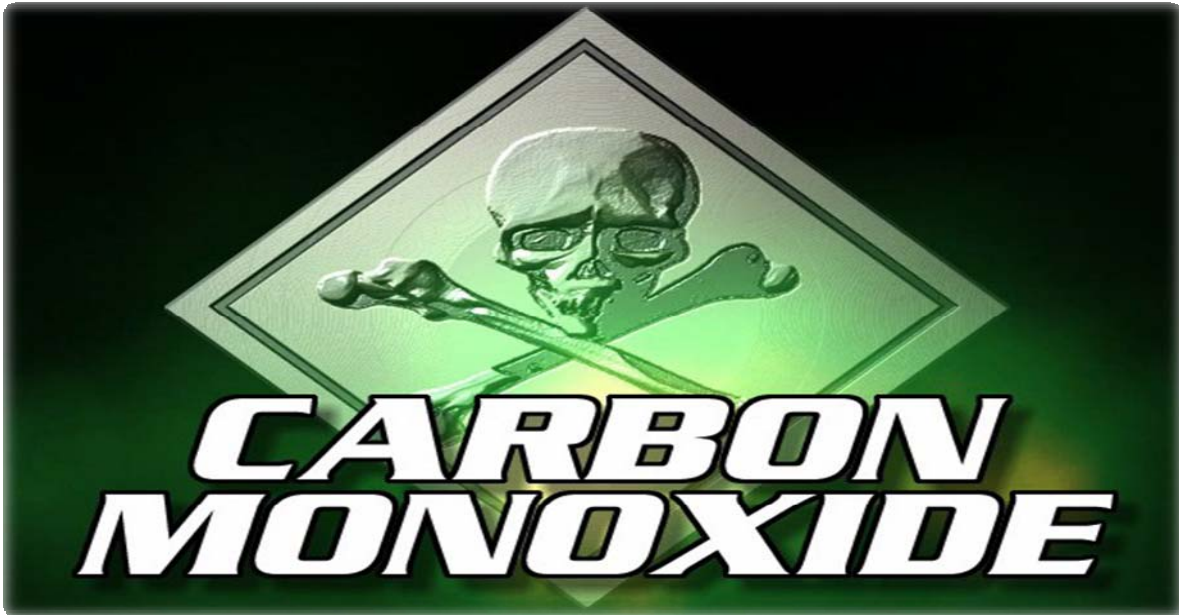


# New Wisconsin law requires CO detectors in homes



**First it was smoke alarms, and now its carbon monoxide alarms.**

New laws requiring all residential homes to install carbon monoxide detectors have fire chiefs smiling.

Any opportunity to alert the public and prevent long term health issues and possible death is a plus for everyone.

As of February 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 all single- and two-family homes were required to install CO detectors, which act like smoke detectors by sensing carbon monoxide gas and sounding an alarm. The law applies to both existing homes and homes under construction. Split level houses and duplexes are included. However, multi-family homes, like an apartment building, were already required to get detectors last year.

Existing homes can use plug-in & battery powered alarms and homes newly constructed after Feb. 1, 2011 will be required to install interconnected carbon monoxide detectors that closely mirror the current Wisconsin requirements for smoke detectors. This legislation would allow builders and consumers to use combination smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in newly constructed homes in place of just installing smoke detectors.

Alarms are required in the basement and every floor of a dwelling, except for attics and garages.

The only reason to not have a detector in your home is if you do not own any gas, oil or wood burning appliances including fireplaces and pellet stoves or portable propane space heaters. If you have an attached garage you are required to have Carbon Monoxide detectors in your home regardless whether or not you have combustion appliances.

**Basically, unless you have a totally electric home and no attached garage, you'll need CO alarms.**

Carbon Monoxide is tasteless and odorless and is very dangerous because you have no way of knowing it's in your home. Just because your furnace or boiler is located in the basement does not mean that it is isolated from the rest of your home. It will permeate into your entire house.

While Wisconsin law requires CO detectors, there is no penalty for non-compliance.

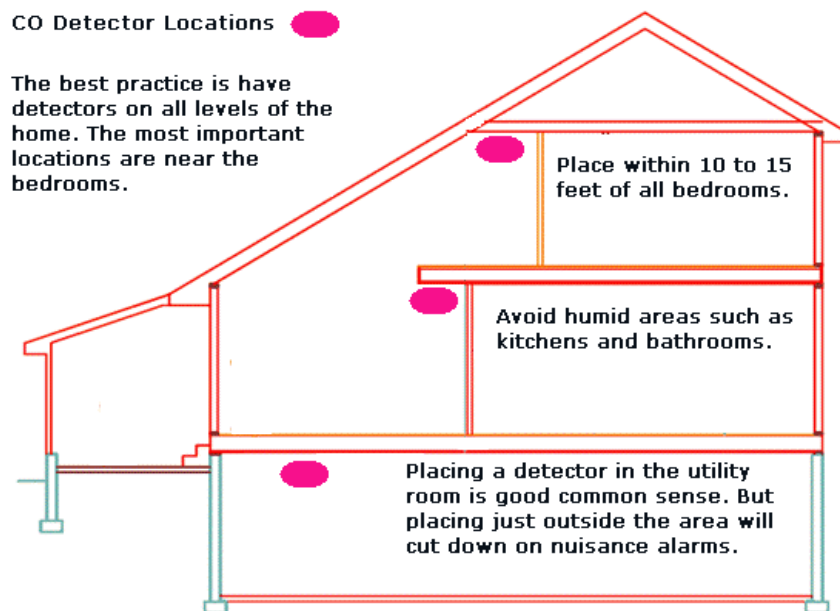
Mike Goldstone from the Sister Bay, Liberty Grove Fire Department suggests purchasing a detector with a digital display rather than just a flashing light; this will assist the home owner and the emergency response team in determining the level of the gasses present.

Mr. Goldstone strongly recommends that when the detectors alarm sounds, leave the building immediately and call 911. Do not ventilate the building because this reduces the ability of the emergency response team to determine the source. Mr. Goldstone stated that almost 1/3 of all Carbon Monoxide calls they receive are positive, usually originating from furnaces and water heaters.

“A lot of people don’t realize that smoke and carbon monoxide detectors don’t last forever”, explains Goldstone. “They have a shelf life of five to 10 years. The sensors in them go bad just like the electronics you have at home. For example, your stereo doesn’t last forever.”

If you do not currently have carbon monoxide detectors in your home, please consider doing so this winter. They are inexpensive, easy to install and can easily save your life. For more information on carbon monoxide, visit the [US Consumer Product Safety Commission website](#).

**The Sister Bay, Liberty Grove Fire Department has an ongoing smoke detector program.** If you live in a single family residence within the boundaries of these fire districts you can contact them at 920-854-4021 and they will provide you with battery operated smoke detectors free of charge. They will assist you with determining the placement of the detectors in areas where they will best protect you. Mr. Goldstone recommends that if you live within the Sister Bay Liberty Grove fire districts and have questions on Carbon Monoxide or Smoke Detectors to contact them. Check with your local fire department to see if they offer the same services.



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