

### What can I do to prevent CO in my home?

The first line of defense in preventing CO poisoning is the proper installation, use, maintenance and inspection of your fuel-burning appliances.

Correct operation of natural gas, or any fuel-burning appliance, requires an adequate supply of air for complete combustion and proper venting of the products of combustion to the outside through the vent connector and chimney. Heating a residence with a non-vented gas appliance is prohibited by code in Alberta.

For safety's sake, to prevent CO poisoning, take the following precautions:

- Do not operate a vehicle in an enclosed area such as a garage, even with the door open. To warm-up a vehicle, always back it onto the driveway or the street and close the garage door
- Always have a fresh air supply *before* you use a wood-burning fireplace. Open a nearby window or install a fresh air duct directly to the fireplace.
- Never heat your home with a gas range, oven, clothes dryer or any unvented space heater.
- Never run exhaust fans, power attic vents or a central vacuum system for prolonged periods.
- Keep all flue vents and chimneys clear of debris and blockages. In the winter, make sure your chimney is free of frost and snow.
- Never insulate or seal a draft hood, wind cap or exhaust vent on a natural gas appliance.
- Never block a furnace combustion air intake or fresh air vent.
- Keep the area around natural gas appliances clean and unobstructed.
- Repair vent pipes from the furnace and water heater to the chimney that appear rusted or pitted immediately. Annually inspect the top of a metal chimney for corrosion, rust or deterioration.
- Ensure furnace panels and grills are kept in place and the fan compartment door is secure.
- Never use a charcoal barbecue grill, portable gas grill inside a home, trailer, garage or any enclosed area.
- Hire an experienced heating contractor to install, repair or adjust fuel-burning appliances.
- Ask ATCO Gas or a qualified contractor to inspect your space and water heating appliances annually.
- Look at appliances regularly for problems such as soot collecting near a burner or a vent. Ensure furnace filters are clean and belts are not cracked.
- Check the flame on your natural gas appliances regularly. The flame should be clear blue. If it is yellow this is a sign that the fuel isn't burning completely and CO could be present.

For an additional measure of protection, you may wish to install an Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC) or Canadian Standards Association (CSA) approved CO detector. A CO detector must always be considered **your second line of defense**. It cannot take the place of proper use and maintenance of your fuel-burning appliances.