

# Carbon Monoxide (CO)

## A tenant guide

### The Problem

You can't see it. You can't taste it. You can't even smell it. But carbon monoxide can kill without warning in just a matter of hours. You are particularly at risk when you are asleep because you cannot recognise the early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

### The Symptoms

The **symptoms** of mild carbon monoxide poisoning may be similar to those of cold and flu infections or food poisoning and include:

- ✓ headache,
- ✓ nausea,
- ✓ abdominal pain,
- ✓ dizziness,
- ✓ sore throat
- ✓ and dry cough.

**In children**, the symptoms are similar to those of a stomach upset, with nausea and vomiting.

Unlike flu infections, carbon monoxide poisoning **doesn't cause** a high temperature.

**Severe** poisoning can result in: fast / irregular heart rate, difficulty breathing, confusion, drowsiness, seizures, loss of consciousness and even death.

If your **pet** suddenly becomes ill or dies unexpectedly (not related to age or an existing condition) you should investigate a possible CO leak. The smaller the animal or person, the faster CO will affect them.

If you or your family experience the above symptoms, and you believe carbon monoxide may be involved, **you must seek urgent medical advice**. Your

doctor will need to test a blood or breath sample. Carbon monoxide quickly leaves the blood and **tests may be inaccurate if taken more than four hours after exposure has ended**.

### As a Tenant you should....

- **NEVER** use a gas appliance if you think it is not working properly. Signs to look out for include yellow or orange flames (except for fuel-effect fires which display this colour flame), soot or stains around the appliance and pilot lights which frequently blow out.
- **NEVER** cover an appliance or block the convection air vents.
- **NEVER** block or obstruct any fixed ventilation grilles or air bricks.
- **NEVER** block or cover outside flues.
- **NEVER** allow an engineer who is not on the Gas Safe Register to install or maintain your appliance(s).
- **NEVER** sleep in a room where an appliance that is not of the room-sealed type (eg a conventional gas fire) is left burning at night.
- **SHOW CAUTION** Whenever draught exclusion, ceiling or extraction fans, double glazing or conservatory extensions are fitted to a room containing a gas appliance, the appliance should subsequently be checked for safety.

### Otherwise You May Be At Risk of Carbon Monoxide poisoning

If you smell gas, or suspect a carbon monoxide leak, you should immediately do the following:

- Open all doors and windows.
- Shut off the gas supply at the meter control valve (if you know where it is).
- If gas continues to escape call **National Grid** on the **Gas Emergency**

**Freephone Number 0800 111 999.**