



# COUNTY OF KENOSHA

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Kenosha County Division of Health urges people to check carbon monoxide detectors when resetting clocks this weekend**

As we turn back the clocks on Sunday and temperatures continue to fall, the Kenosha County Division of Health reminds residents to take action to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

“Carbon monoxide poisonings become more prevalent when temperatures drop and furnaces start running more frequently,” said Mark Melotik, environmental health manager with the Kenosha County Division of Health. “The end of Daylight Saving Time, when we change the clocks, is the perfect time to make sure your heating sources and carbon monoxide detectors are in good working order.”

On average, carbon monoxide poisoning sends about 500 Wisconsinites to the emergency room each year, according to data from the Wisconsin Environmental Public Health Tracking Program. These trips to the ER for carbon monoxide poisoning are preventable when people are prepared.

To protect yourself and your family from carbon monoxide, follow these safety tips:

- **Make sure you have working carbon monoxide detectors.** All homes and duplexes in Wisconsin are required to have detectors on every level, including the basement, but not the attic or storage areas. Detectors can be purchased at most hardware stores for \$20-50. The beginning and end of Daylight Saving Time is a good time each year to replace the batteries in your detector and push the “Test” button to be sure it’s working properly. Replace your detector every five years or according to manufacturer’s instructions.

- **Have your furnace or wood-burning stove inspected annually.** Hire a professional to make sure it is functionally sound and vents properly outside the home.
- **Never run a gasoline or propane heater or a grill (gas or charcoal) inside your home or garage.** Any heating system that burns fuel produces carbon monoxide. Use a battery-powered detector where you have fuel burning devices but no electric outlets, such as in tents, cabins, and RVs.
- **Generators should be run at a safe distance (at least 20 feet) from the home.** Never run a generator in the home or garage, or right next to windows or doors.
- **Never run a car in an enclosed space.** Even with a door or window open, carbon monoxide levels can still build up to an unsafe level.

At high levels, carbon monoxide can cause death within minutes. Symptoms of overexposure to carbon monoxide include headache, fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, nausea, and confusion. If you think you may be experiencing carbon monoxide poisoning, or your detector sounds an alarm, head outside immediately for fresh air and call 911.

Visit the Wisconsin Department of Health Services website (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/air/co.htm>) for more information about carbon monoxide poisoning, and learn more about Kenosha County Environmental Health Services at <http://www.kenoshacounty.org/332/Environmental-Health-Services>. For more information about Division of Health programs and services, follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/KenoshaCountyHealth](http://www.facebook.com/KenoshaCountyHealth).

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