



News Release FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PEOPLES EDUCATES CUSTOMERS ABOUT CARBON MONOXIDE SAFETY

PITTSBURGH, PA (January 13, 2020) – According to the Centers for Disease Control, more than 400 people die each year and 50,000 are seen in emergency rooms due to accidental carbon monoxide poisoning. In many cases, this is caused by faulty, improperly-used or incorrectly-vented appliances such as furnaces, stoves, generators, water heaters and fireplaces. As people spend more time indoors over the winter months, Peoples is issuing a reminder about maintaining natural gas appliances, the importance of carbon monoxide detectors and the potential dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless and potentially dangerous gas produced when fuel is burned without enough air for complete combustion. The flame in gas appliances should be blue, possibly with flecks of orange. If the flame is mostly yellow, it indicates that the gas is not burning properly and could be giving off carbon monoxide.

During cold weather months, as buildings remain closed and fuel is burned for heating, inefficient combustion and poor ventilation can lead to a build-up of carbon monoxide indoors. In large amounts, the gas can cause headaches, unconsciousness, brain damage and even death. **Carbon monoxide can be detected with a simple home monitor.**

“Every winter we receive multiple service calls involving carbon monoxide. The calls come from neighborhoods of all ages and income levels throughout our territory. Commercial accounts and businesses also need to train their employees on the dangers and how to identify a possible CO situation,” said Barry Leezer, Sr. Director, Customer Operations for Peoples. **“Carbon monoxide is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in America.** I can’t stress enough how important it is to be educated about the symptoms.”

The signs of carbon monoxide poisoning can often mimic flu symptoms. It’s important for people to recognize the signs of potential carbon monoxide poisoning, to know what to do if they occur, and to learn how to prevent this dangerous hazard.

Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning:

- Headaches
- Drowsiness/fatigue
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Irregular breathing or shortness of breath
- Overall paleness
- Blurred vision
- Very red lips and ears
- Loss of coordination
- Vomiting

What You Should Do:

- Open windows and doors
- Move outside
- Call 911 or your local fire department

Steps You Can Take to Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning:

- **Most importantly, install a battery-operated or plug-in carbon monoxide detector**, positioned outside of bedrooms. Replace the battery when you change your clocks each spring and autumn
- Have your heating systems and vents checked annually by a certified contractor
- Make sure your chimney is cleaned periodically and free of obstructions
- Keep air vents for your gas appliances clear
- Never use a gas oven or stovetop for heating your home
- Do not use portable charcoal or propane grills indoors or in the garage
- Do not run an automobile, gasoline engine or generator in an enclosed space
- Use only space heaters that are approved by local fire codes and properly installed
- Check fireplaces for closed or blocked flues
- Periodically check range pilots for soot or carbon build up
- Never use portable generators inside homes or garages, even if windows are open

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About Peoples:

Peoples is an energy provider serving approximately 740,000 homes and businesses in Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Kentucky. The company’s mission is to improve the lives of its customers and to help build long-term economic growth for the regions it serves. For more information about Peoples, visit www.peoples-gas.com and follow Peoples on social media @peoplesnatgas.