

**Effective January 1, 2007**

***The Illinois General Assembly has passed and the Governor has signed the Carbon Monoxide Alarm Detector Act (Public Act 094-0741).***



## **Features of the Law**

- Every “dwelling unit” must be equipped with at least one operable carbon monoxide alarm within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping purposes.
- The alarm may be combined with smoke detecting devices provided the unit complies with respective standards and the alarm differentiates the hazard.
- A “dwelling unit” means a room or suite of rooms used for human habitation, and includes single-family residences, multiple family residences, and mixed used buildings.
- If a structure contains more than one “dwelling unit,” an alarm must be installed within 15 feet of every sleeping room in each “dwelling unit.”
- The owner must supply and install all required alarms. A landlord must ensure that the alarms are operable on the date of initiation or a lease. The tenant is responsible for testing and maintaining the alarm after the lease commences.
- A landlord is required to furnish one tenant per dwelling unit with written information regarding alarm testing and maintenance.
- Willful failure to install or maintain in operating condition any alarm is a Class B criminal misdemeanor.
- The Act does not exempt certain residential units from the requirement. Those residential units in a building that (i) does not rely on combustion of fossil fuel for heat, ventilation or hot water; (ii) is not connected to a garage; and (iii) is not sufficiently close to any ventilated source of carbon monoxide to receive carbon monoxide from that source OR a residential unit that is not sufficiently close to any source of carbon monoxide from that source, as determined by the local building commissioner shall NOT require carbon monoxide detectors.

## **What you should consider while Shopping for your CO Detector**

- Detectors generally cost under \$100, usually in the \$20 - \$60 range.
- Many independent agencies have tested and compiled lists of different makes and models of carbon monoxide detectors. Make sure the detector you choose has a UL (Underwriter Laboratories) seal of approval.
- Detectors can be battery powered, plug-in with battery back up or hard-wired with a secondary battery back up. *The law requires a battery back up.*
- The alarm can be combined with smoke detectors, as long as the combined use complies with the specific rules relating to these devices and emits an alarm that clearly differentiates between smoke and Carbon Monoxide.
- The lifespan of carbon monoxide detectors varies from 3 years up to 10 years, depending on the brand and model, at which time sensors begin to lose their sensitivity to detect carbon monoxide. Refer to your owner's manual to determine the lifespan of your particular carbon monoxide detector.

## **Installing your CO Detector**

- Have a qualified technician inspect your fuel-burning appliances, such as oil and gas furnaces, hot water heaters and stoves at least once a year.
- Install your UL Listed carbon monoxide detector within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping purposes.
- Do not install CO Detectors directly above or beside fuel-burning appliances, as they may emit small amounts of carbon monoxide upon start up. A detector should not be placed within 15 feet of heating or cooking appliances. FYI – Do not locate your CO Detector near your sump pump, the batteries from a battery back-up system emits sulfur dioxide which a carbon monoxide detector believes is CO, if your detector is sounding near these units, move it at least 10 feet away from the battery back-up to avoid false alarms.
- Mount the detector on the ceiling out of the way of potential interference, manufacturers suggest. CO is roughly the same weight as air coming from combustion appliances and will rise with the warmer air. Check manufacturers recommendations.

## **Know how to respond to a CO detector alarm**

- If your detector alarms it is indicating an unsafe atmosphere, wasting time opening windows could be a deadly decision. Get out, call 911 and crews will respond with very sensitive equipment that can trace the source.
- CO poisoning symptoms can mimic the flu. Frequent headaches are a common symptom, or feeling better when you leave your home are also possible indications of a problem.

For more information please click on the links below:

EPA Indoor Air Quality

<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/co.html>

EPA Protecting Your Family

<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/coftsht.html>

CPSC Questions and Answers about CO

<http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/466.html>

Please call the Crystal Lake Fire Rescue Department if you have questions or concerns: (815) 356-3640.