

# This leaflet could save your life

What you need to know about carbon monoxide (CO)



can't see it!



can't smell it!



can't taste it!

YOUR GAS EMERGENCY  
AND PIPELINE SERVICE



WALES & WEST  
UTILITIES

# What is carbon monoxide (CO)?



You can't see it. You can't smell it. You can't taste it.

Carbon monoxide, also known as CO, is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, poisonous gas that is released when any fossil fuel that burns, doesn't burn properly.

Breathing it in can make you unwell, and it can kill. Even low levels of exposure, over a long period, can cause serious health issues.

## Know the signs...

Although CO is known as the silent killer, there are some key things to look out for:



Gas appliances that are burning with a floppy yellow or orange flame that is normally crisp and blue



Pilot lights on boilers frequently blowing out



Extra condensation inside windows



Soot or yellow stains around appliances

## Where does CO come from?

It isn't just the gas appliances in your home that can produce CO. Any appliance powered by coal, oil or wood can also produce CO if they are faulty or used incorrectly.

## What are the symptoms of CO poisoning?

CO poisoning happens when you breathe in even small amounts of this poisonous gas.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can be similar to those of food poisoning and the flu. However, unlike the flu, carbon monoxide poisoning does not cause a high temperature (fever).

## Symptoms include:

- headache
- dizziness
- nausea (feeling sick) and vomiting
- tiredness and confusion
- stomach pain
- shortness of breath and difficulty breathing.



# How to prevent CO

## Get an audible CO alarm

- these can be purchased from your local DIY store or supermarket.
- make sure it's in the correct position.
- test your CO alarm regularly.
- check that your CO alarm is certified to British standard BS EN 50292:2023.

**Remember, alarms are important but they're not a substitute for annual gas safety checks by a qualified engineer.**

## Suspect CO?

If you smell **gas** or suspect CO poisoning, go outside immediately and call **us** on the national gas emergency number **0800 111 999**.



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