



Carbon monoxide poisoning endangers lives.

Local municipal building officials are the best source of information concerning carbon monoxide alarms in new construction.



In the future, fire department inspectors will be checking the installation of CO alarms during annual fire safety inspections.

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### Statutory Installation Requirements in 2007 Wisconsin Act 205

(2) INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS. (a) Except as provided in par. (b), the owner of a residential building shall install a carbon monoxide detector in all of the following places not later than the date specified under par. (c):

1. In the basement of the building if the basement has a fuel-burning appliance.
2. Within 15 feet of each sleeping area of a unit that has a fuel-burning appliance.
3. Within 15 feet of each sleeping area of a unit that is immediately adjacent to a unit that has a fuel-burning appliance.
4. In each room that has a fuel-burning appliance and that is not used as a sleeping area. A carbon monoxide detector shall be installed under this subdivision not more than 75 feet from the fuel-burning appliance.
5. In each hallway leading from a unit that has a fuel-burning appliance, in a location that is within 75 feet from the unit, except that, if there is no electrical outlet within this distance, the owner shall place the carbon monoxide detector at the closest available electrical outlet in the hallway.

(b) If a unit is not part of a multiunit building, the owner of the residential building need not install more than one carbon monoxide detector in the unit.

**Find this carbon monoxide brochure online:** <http://commerce.wi.gov/SB/SB-PubCarbMonoBroch209.pdf>

S&B also has a "Making Wisconsin Nights Safer" smoke detector brochure online: <http://commerce.wi.gov/SBdocs/SB-SmokeAlarmBroch8282.pdf>

# Carbon monoxide alarms must be installed in most new commercial - residential construction in Wisconsin as of October 1, 2008,



# and in most existing commercial - residential buildings by 2010

Beginning October 1, 2008, carbon monoxide (CO) alarms must be installed in new Wisconsin construction of "commercial" residential buildings which have fuel-burning appliances.

Most one- and two-family dwellings are not included in the regulations, although installing CO alarms in those homes is a good idea.

\*The residential types included in the new regulations are tourist rooming houses (cabins), bed and breakfast establishments, and any public building used for sleeping or lodging, such as hotels, motels, condominiums, apartment buildings, dormitories, fraternities, sororities, convents, seminaries, jails, prisons, home shelters, and community-based residential facilities. Hospitals and nursing homes are not included.

<http://commerce.wi.gov/SB/SB-PubCarbMonoBroch209.pdf>

Safety and Buildings Division  
[commerce.wi.gov](http://commerce.wi.gov)



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## Carbon monoxide is dangerous!

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas produced by incompletely burning fuel containing carbon. Carbon monoxide poisoning can cause brain damage and death. You can't see it, smell it, or taste it; but carbon monoxide can kill. CO can be formed, for example, by open flames, or fuel-burning space heaters, water heaters, furnaces, boilers, and clothes dryers.

- Carbon monoxide is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States. The federal Centers for Disease Control estimates CO poisoning annually claims nearly 500 lives, and causes more than 15,000 visits to hospital emergency rooms.

- Carbon monoxide is produced by common household fuel-burning appliances. When not properly vented, carbon monoxide from these appliances can build up in a room or building, displacing oxygen.

- Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning such as headaches, nausea, and fatigue, are often mistaken for something other than CO because the deadly gas goes undetected as it builds up in a building. Prolonged exposure can lead to brain damage and death.

## What is a carbon monoxide alarm?

A carbon monoxide alarm is a device that will detect the presence of carbon monoxide (CO) and create a noise which gives people in the area a chance to safely leave the building.

CO alarms by themselves are not smoke detectors and vice versa. However, there are combination smoke/CO alarms. CO alarms are usually plugged into a wall electrical outlet or wired directly into a building's electrical system.



## What are the new requirements in Wisconsin for carbon monoxide alarms?

The new regulations were issued as emergency rules by the state Department of Commerce, Safety and Buildings Division, as required by April 2008 legislation titled "2007 Wisconsin Act 205."

See the emergency rules for current technical aspects of alarm locations, etc.  
<http://commerce.wi.gov/SBdocs/SB-CodeDev2162Emerg0908.pdf>

**Requirements for new tourist rooming houses** (cabins under the scope of Wisconsin's Uniform Dwelling Code, Comm 21.095) as of October 1, 2008:

- Installation of carbon monoxide alarms where any type of fuel burning appliances are installed.
- The carbon monoxide alarms must be continuously powered by the building's electrical service with battery backup.

**Requirements for new commercial - residential buildings as of October 1, 2008** (Commercial Building Code, Comm 62.1200):

- Installation of carbon monoxide alarms where any type of fuel burning appliances are installed.
- The carbon monoxide alarms must be continuously powered by the building's electrical service with battery backup.

**Requirements for commercial - residential buildings existing on October 1, 2008, or receiving plan approval prior to October 1, 2008** (Act 205 itself, not the emergency rules, puts in place these requirements for existing tourist rooming houses):

- Installation of carbon monoxide alarms by April 1, 2010.
- No mandatory type of power sources for the carbon monoxide alarms, thereby allowing batteries, electrical outlet plug-ins, or wiring directly to the building's electrical service.
- Omission of carbon monoxide alarms is allowed provided there are no attached garages and all of the fuel burning appliances are of sealed combustion type either under warranty or annually inspected for carbon monoxide emissions.

