

KNOWING ABOUT CARBON MONOXIDE — In General

What You Can Do to Prevent CO Poisoning:

- Educate those on your boat about CO poisoning: make sure each knows the symptoms and treatment and areas to avoid.
- Avoid backdrafting or the “station wagon” effect that can cause carbon monoxide to accumulate inside the cabin, cockpit and bridge when operating the boat at high bow angle.
- Avoid hazard zones: exhaust pipes of inboard engines; outboard engines and generators; exhaust from another vessel docked, beached or anchored alongside our boat.
- Watch for accumulations while idling or moving at slow speeds, especially when there is little or no wind.
- A little bit of awareness goes a long way in keeping you, your family and friends safe.

Know Where It Accumulates and How to Protect Yourself and Others.

- CO can harm and even kill you whether you're inside or outside your boat.
- CO can affect you whether you're underway, moored or anchored.
- CO that drifts in and out of a cabin can be dangerous, since the effects of CO are cumulative and can build up gradually in a person's bloodstream over hours or even days before it reaches critical levels.
- CO enters your bloodstream through the lungs, blocking the oxygen your body needs.
- Protect yourself from carbon monoxide by avoiding areas where the gas accumulates. And remember to get a free vessel safety check from the US Coast Guard.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, a colorless and deadly poisonous gas. People can be overcome by it within minutes. Every year more than 500 people in the United States die from CO produced by fuel-burning appliances and vehicles (furnaces, water heaters, room heaters and boats).

Be Aware of How CO Exposure Affects the Body:

- At 200 PPM (parts per million) = slight headaches within two to three hours.
- At 400 PPM = frontal headaches within one to two hours.
- At 800 PPM = dizziness, nausea and convulsions within 45 minutes; insensible within two hours.
- At 1,600 PPM = headache, dizziness and nausea within 20 minutes. Death within 30 minutes.
- At 3,200 PPM = headache and dizziness within five minutes. Death within 30 minutes.
- At 6,400 PPM = headache and dizziness within one to two minutes. Death in less than 15 minutes.
- Should you suspect anyone has been exposed to CO poisoning, get the person into fresh air and seek medical attention immediately.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is generated whenever combustion occurs, including the operation of gasoline AND diesel engines.

- Every year more than 200 people in the United States die from CO produced by fuel-burning appliances, i.e., furnaces, ranges, water heaters and room heaters.
- Others die from CO produced while burning charcoal inside a home, garage, vehicle or tent.
- Still others die from CO produced by cars left running in attached garages. And more than 100 others die from CO poisoning boating-related mishaps.
- The best way to protect yourself from carbon monoxide is to avoid places where the gas accumulates.