

Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week, Prevention of CO, and \$10 CO Detector Rebate

November 1 to 7th is National Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week, so it's a good time to remind everyone about the importance of installing carbon monoxide detectors and how to prevent this deadly gas from building up in your home.

From November 1 to November 30, 2018, Manitoba Hydro is offering a \$10 instant rebate on qualifying carbon monoxide detectors at participating retail stores throughout Manitoba.

Q: Why is Manitoba Hydro offering this rebate?

A: Our top priority at Manitoba Hydro is the safety of our customers and employees. With the heating season upon us, the risk of carbon monoxide exposure increases. Offering this rebate will help our customers purchase CO detectors more affordably.

Q: What carbon monoxide detectors qualify for the rebate?

A: Plug-in models with battery back-up that bear the CSA or UL certification. A number of models qualify, including multi-gas and combination packs.

(Hard-wired models or models that are battery-operated only do not qualify for the rebate)

Q: Where are the CO detector rebates available and until when?

A: \$10 instant rebates are available from November 1 - 30th at participating retailers province-wide:

Canadian Tire (15 locations)

Costco (3 locations)

EG Penner Building Centres Ltd. (Steinbach)

Grunthal Lumber (Grunthal)

Home Depot (6 locations)

Home Hardware (45 locations)

London Drugs (1225 St. Mary's Road)

McMunn and Yates (15 locations)

Rona (12 locations)

WM Dyck & Sons (Niverville)

Q: What is Carbon Monoxide?

A: Carbon monoxide, or CO, is an invisible, odourless, tasteless gas that you cannot detect on your own, which is why it is often referred to as "the silent killer". Carbon monoxide gas is produced when natural gas, wood, propane, kerosene, diesel, charcoal, gasoline or other fuel burns without adequate ventilation. Improperly vented appliances and equipment may allow carbon monoxide to accumulate to dangerous levels.

Symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the common flu, and can lead to death.

Q: How is carbon monoxide detected in the home? What are the signs?

A: Carbon monoxide detectors can alert you to the presence of carbon monoxide gas before toxic levels are reached. While CO detectors can alert you to the presence of carbon monoxide, they don't prevent it. Appropriate use and maintenance of your gas furnace and other fuel-burning appliances like wood or gas stoves, and fireplaces is equally important.

Other signs of CO buildup include:

- Stuffy or stale air
- More condensation than usual on windows
- Soot buildup around fireplaces or chimneys
- Back-drafting of fuel-burning equipment
- Pilot lights that keep going out

If you already have CO detectors, be sure to check their expiration date and follow the manufacturer's instructions to regularly test the unit and replace the batteries. Most carbon monoxide detectors will last between 7 and 10 years, after which time they should be replaced.

Q: How is carbon monoxide buildup prevented?

A: Prevention of CO buildup is the key.

- In homes with a gas furnace, water heater, clothes dryer or range, an attached garage, fireplace or wood stove, or other fuel-burning equipment, it is recommended to install and maintain a carbon monoxide detector on each level of your home, especially near sleeping areas.

(Hard-wired CO detectors became part of the building code in 2011).

- Have gas appliances and heating equipment professionally installed, inspected and maintained; and use only as recommended.
- Keep all fuel-burning appliances and equipment properly vented to the outdoors.
- Never operate propane or gasoline-fueled equipment inside your home or garage; or start your vehicle and leave it to idle in your garage, even with the overhead door open.

Q: What to do if your carbon monoxide alarm goes off?

A: Do not ignore your alarm or unplug it – it is sounding for a reason. If you suspect equipment malfunction, immediately turn off the appliance or equipment, open all windows and doors, go outside and call Manitoba Hydro for an inspection at 1-888-MBHYDRO (1-888-624-9376).

Q: What are the signs & symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning?

A: Symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the common flu. When inhaled, CO depletes your red blood cells of oxygen. Depending on the amount inhaled and the length of exposure, symptoms may vary.

Low Exposure

Slight headache and/or shortness of breath with moderate physical activity.

High Exposure

Severe headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, mental confusion, weakness, vision & hearing impairment, collapse or fainting during exertion, loss of muscle control, and/or drowsiness.

Extreme Exposure

Unconsciousness, brain damage, or death.

Q: What to do if you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning?

A: Call 911 immediately, open all windows and doors, and get everyone outside to fresh air.

Q: Is Manitoba Hydro offering instant rebates on LED bulbs and other energy efficient products this fall?

A: Instant rebates on LED bulbs and other energy efficient products have ended. Rebates are only available on qualifying CO detectors.