



Maine Chapter

Company _____ Job Name _____ Date _____

Weekly Tool Box Talk: **Carbon Monoxide Poisoning**

Outbreaks of carbon monoxide (CO) poisonings have been associated with storm-related power outages due to improper placement and operation of gas-powered generators and other alternative heating and power sources. A study of a CO poisoning outbreak in the aftermath of the January 1998 Ice Storm found that improper placement of a gasoline generator, such as in a basement or garage, could increase the risk of CO poisoning by 20 to 300-fold. Using a kerosene heater in a room without any doors to other rooms opened, or failing to crack a window, also put people at increased risk for CO poisoning. CO is an odorless colorless gas emitted when burning most fuels. Improper operation or placement of alternative heating or power sources can result in poisoning when CO gas builds-up in enclosed spaces.

Common symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu. They can include:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Headaches | dizziness | weakness |
| Nausea | vomiting | loss of muscle control |
| tightening of the chest | convulsions | redness of the eyes |
| sleepiness | fluttering of the heart | confusion |
- ringing in the ear.

Recommendations To Avoid CO Poisoning During Power Outages:

- ✓ Place generators outdoors in a well ventilated location • Generators should be placed well away from windows or doors • Generators should not be placed in an enclosed or semi-enclosed space (such as basement, cellar bulkhead, attached garage) where carbon monoxide can build up to dangerous levels.
- ✓ Use kerosene heaters in a well ventilated area, by either keeping doors to other areas open or keeping a window partially open (at least 1 inch) • Use only K-1 grade fuel in kerosene heaters • Follow instructions for setting the wick height.
- ✓ Keep a carbon monoxide monitor certified by the Underwriters Laboratory, and available in many hardware stores. If battery powered, replace batteries at least annually.

Safety Recommendations: _____

Job Specific Topics: _____

M.S.D.S. Reviewed: _____

Attended By: _____

