



# *Walpole Fire Department*

## *Emergency Services*

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### Walpole Fire Department Carbon Monoxide Press Release

#### PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM THE DANGER OF CARBON MONOXIDE

With the amount of snow that we have been experiencing, this winter, the Walpole Fire Department wanted to stress the importance of having working carbon monoxide detectors within your homes. Since March of 2006 state law has required carbon monoxide detectors in most homes. Carbon monoxide detectors are required on each habitable level of your home and within 10' of all bedrooms. Winter snows have created drifts that could block exhaust vents, forcing carbon monoxide back into your home. Newer high efficiency appliances and those with power vent blowers by definition waste less heat, so the exhaust air temperature is very low. Often it is too low to melt snow in a plugged exhaust pipe or vent. Keep sidewall and direct vents clear of obstructions, such as drifting snow and bushes to provide proper ventilation.

Carbon monoxide is a byproduct of all fossil fuels, such as natural gas, oil, kerosene and wood. When using a wood stove please make sure that all ashes are removed from the stove prior to closing down the damper. We have seen incidents where the ashes continued to burn allowing for carbon monoxide to vent into the home. If you heat your home with oil or gas please make sure that your heating system is cleaned on an annual basis. You should never leave a vehicle running inside a garage, even if the door is open, fumes will build up quickly inside the home. If appliances that burn fuel are properly maintained and used, the amount of CO produced is usually not hazardous.

There are several types of carbon monoxide alarms that are allowed in Massachusetts: Battery powered, Plug in AC powered with battery backup, AC primary hardwired with battery backup, low voltage with secondary power and combination smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms which have both audible and voice activated alerts. Please make sure that your homes are equipped with both smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. If you already have these devices in place please take the time to test them. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the fire department.