

## **KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM GOES OFF**

More and more New Jersey households are installing carbon monoxide (CO) alarms as protection against this **invisible** hazard. **CO is a gas that is undetectable by human senses yet it can cause health problems, brain damage and even death.** When concentrations of the gas build up, flu-like symptoms may develop, especially among younger and older members who are less tolerant of this poison.

If your carbon monoxide alarm activates:

- Gather all family members together in a predesignated meeting place and check to be sure everyone is present.
- Call 911. Leave the building immediately. Do not reenter until responders say it is safe to do so.

This public service announcement is intended to educate residents about Carbon Monoxide, Carbon Monoxide Detectors, and the implications that arise when they activate.

Important facts about Carbon Monoxide:

- Carbon Monoxide is a product of incomplete combustion.
- Carbon Monoxide is **INVISIBLE**. There will be no smoke or haze to betray its presence.
- Carbon Monoxide is **ODORLESS**.
- Carbon Monoxide is **DEADLY**.
- **CO** is the symbol for Carbon Monoxide.
- It is commonly misquoted as “CO<sub>2</sub>” which is a gas that does not support combustion and is commonly found in fire extinguishers.

We highly recommend that all residences have CO detectors installed. They should be maintained as per the recommendations of the manufacturer, i.e., fresh batteries.

CO detectors are designed to activate early when concentrations of the gas are low. When your detector activates you should immediately contact the Wyckoff Police Department at 201-891-2121 or dial 911. The dispatcher will send a patrol officer while on the phone, and you will be questioned about the well being of all occupants of your residence, and their ability to leave the structure without assistance. Other emergency services will be activated if needed. You will be urged to leave your house – we can only assume that the levels of CO are such that no one should be inside. PSE&G will also be notified and they will respond. They will measure the level of CO within your house and attempt to identify the problem and advise you if it is safe to reoccupy your home.

If you have an automatic CO alarm system in your home, the Police Department will attempt to contact you initially. However, should no one reply to the phone or door, a determination will be made if it is in your best interest that we make entry into your

home. If so, the easiest method to make sure the CO has not overcome occupants will be employed.

If you plan on leaving for extended periods for business or vacation, you may want to check with your alarm company to see if the CO detectors may be taken off the system.