

# Carbon monoxide is number one cause of accidental poisonings

Carbon monoxide is a serious danger and one that many people do not understand. It is the #1 cause of accidental poisoning deaths in North America. In Canada, there are approximately 1,000 reported poisonings and 250 deaths per year due to carbon monoxide.

The major cause of high levels of carbon monoxide in the home is faulty ventilation of furnaces, hot water heaters, fireplaces, cooking stoves, grills and kerosene heaters. Other common sources are car exhausts and gas powered portable machines. Faulty or improper ventilation of natural gas and fuel oil furnaces during the cold winter months account for most carbon monoxide poisoning cases. Unlike smoke or fire, carbon monoxide is almost impossible to detect. Often called "The Silent Killer," carbon monoxide is completely colourless, odourless and tasteless, and can kill in minutes.

Carbon monoxide is also referred to as "The Great Imitator." In the early stages of carbon monoxide poisoning, symptoms such as nausea and headaches often mimic common illnesses, like the flu. This often leads people to believe that they should stay home and rest. Tragically, home is often the source of the illness and in some cases, the source of death.

However, almost all of these tragedies and mishaps are preventable.

The best defence against carbon monoxide poisoning?

- Regular, preventative maintenance of fuel-burning appliances, furnaces, fireplaces and chimneys.

- Installing a carbon monoxide alarm on every floor of your home including the basement near the home's principal heating source.

Because most fire or carbon monoxide incidents occur at night, Carol Heller, Vice-President of Residential Products for Kidde Safety suggests that "talking alarms" near the sleeping areas may be a good alternative to regular ones. For example, you can get a 'wired-in' or battery voice alarm that could alert with verbal messages based on the hazard at hand.

If the alarm sounds, you and members of your household should leave your home immediately. Call 911 from outside your home and do not return to your home until the problems has been found and corrected.

For more tips on protection and prevention, call toll free at 1-800-565-1976, ext. 224, or visit our website at [www.kiddesafety.com](http://www.kiddesafety.com).

—News Canada



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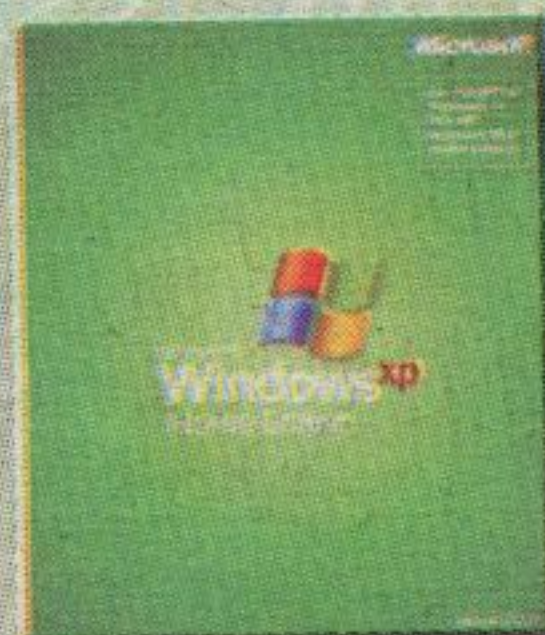
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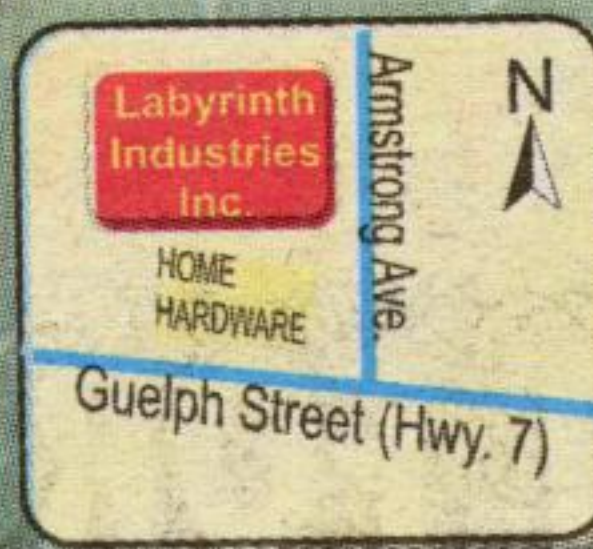
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