What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a common by-product produced when fossil fuels are burned. Although most household equipment and appliances produce minimal carbon monoxide when they are installed and operate properly, they can be deadly when they are not. Something as simple as an opened door to the garage, a small hole in dryer ductwork, or a malfunctioning exhaust fan can cause carbon monoxide levels to quickly rise to dangerous levels..

Why You Need A Carbon Monoxide Detector

There are many ways in which carbon monoxide can be released into your home and cause respiratory damage to your lungs, or worse, death. The following is a list of items that may cause CO to enter your home:

- Fireplaces
- Heaters
- Hot Water Heaters
- Gas Stoves / Ovens
- Automobiles (Attached garages)
- Grills; propane, gas or charcoal
- Kerosene Heaters
- Dryers with clogged ductwork
- Nearby traffic

Buying A Carbon Monoxide Detector

Although all tested and approved carbon monoxide detectors are sufficient for detecting carbon monoxide, there are some key elements you should look for when buying one. Some carbon monoxide detectors are more sensitive to CO than others, meaning they will detect lower levels of CO than other, less sensitive carbon monoxide detectors.

What to Look For When Buying A Carbon Monoxide Detector

Choose a carbon monoxide detector that has been tested and approved.

If you want a carbon monoxide detector that monitors low levels of CO, look for one that has a memory.

If you are not diligent about checking and replacing batteries, a battery operated carbon monoxide detector is not right for you. Although they allow for more flexible placement, a plug-in carbon monoxide detector may be best.