

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous, colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas. CO can be found in areas where workers may be burning common materials such as wood, coal, or oil and using fuels such as gasoline or kerosene.

OSHA Permissible Exposure Limits for Carbon Monoxide *The OSHA PEL is 50 parts per million (ppm). OSHA standards prohibit worker exposure to more than 50 parts of the gas per million parts of air averaged during an 8-hour time period.*

- Carbon monoxide (CO) is a toxic gas because it damages the blood's ability to carry oxygen throughout the body.
- CO is non-irritating and can overcome a worker without warning.
- Workers may not realize they are being exposed to a high level of CO in the air they are breathing.
- According to OSHA's [Quick Card on Carbon Monoxide Poisoning](#):
“Many people die from CO poisoning, usually while using **gasoline powered tools and generators in buildings or semi-enclosed spaces without adequate ventilation.**”



Gasoline generator warning sign reads: Exhaust contains poisonous carbon monoxide gas that can cause unconsciousness or DEATH. Operate in well ventilated outdoor areas... (*4)



Gasoline powered forklift used indoors. (*5)

AVOID DANGEROUS EXPOSURE TO CARBON MONOXIDE:

- Follow all instructions and warnings for gasoline, diesel, and kerosene powered equipment and tools.
- Use tools powered by electricity or compressed air in enclosed areas whenever possible.
- Equipment such as gasoline powered forklifts or even propane radiant heaters used indoors can also be a source of carbon monoxide (CO).
- Open windows and doors in enclosed spaces to avoid CO buildup.
- Even working outdoors with gas powered equipment such as leaf-blowers, powered trowels, and similar tools could expose you to CO dangers after a prolonged use.
- Leave the area and tell your supervisor immediately if you feel dizzy, drowsy, or are experiencing nausea!



(*1)

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