



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Minerals Management Service  
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

Notice No. 172

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**Personnel Overexposed to Carbon Monoxide**

Recently, while sleeping in their living quarters, personnel on a platform were exposed to levels of carbon monoxide (CO) high enough to cause them to exhibit symptoms of overexposure. One employee was hospitalized and treated for CO poisoning. The high concentration level of CO occurred when wind conditions changed and directed exhaust from diesel and natural gas engines into the quarters' ventilation system. Following the incident, the operator found other platforms where unacceptable levels of CO were experienced.

Your attention is directed to 29 CFR Part 1910, Subpart Z, in which the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has established Standards for employee exposure to hazardous substances, including CO.

Therefore, from this information, the following are recommended:

1. Tests be conducted in high-risk areas on existing manned facilities to determine, through the use of continuous CO-detection monitors, if the exposure tolerances listed in the above referenced OSHA regulations are being exceeded or are in danger of being exceeded.
2. If the above referenced tests reveal that a danger to overexposure exists, the following measures are suggested as appropriate:
  - a. Exhaust from internal combustion and fired equipment be rerouted in a manner not to overexpose personnel to CO, and/or
  - b. Ventilation system air intakes be located in areas not susceptible to hazardous substances, and/or
  - c. Permanent monitors and alarms be installed for the purpose of alerting personnel of the need to evacuate the area should the exposure tolerances be exceeded or dangerously approached, and/or
  - d. Buildings be inspected for sources of CO infiltration and, when needed, building integrity be improved.
3. The design of all new manned facilities should consider the potential for personnel exposure to CO.

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