

THE QUIET KILLER

[Announcer] CDC-TV presents Health Matters.

[Dr. Fuyuen Yip] Each year in the United States, approximately 20,000 people go to the emergency room for carbon monoxide poisoning.

[Dr. Paul Garbe] Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas; it's extremely poisonous and it can kill you in minutes, if you're exposed to it.

[Dr. Fuyuen Yip] Nearly 500 people die from carbon monoxide poisoning.

[Announcer] Fire and Rescue Captain Antonio Burden is a first responder and has been a victim of a CO leak in his home.

[Captain Antonio Burden] It's a strange feeling – once you start, you know, feeling dizzy. Then you get a tremendous headache. You also start experiencing nausea and that nausea can lead to other symptoms.

[Dr. Paul Garbe] In a really severe case of carbon monoxide poisoning, someone could lose consciousness or die within minutes.

[Announcer] Hurricanes or severe storms can trigger power outages that last for days. Some people fire up a generator for power or a gas stove to heat their home, but fail to realize the danger.

[Dr. Robert Geller] It's one thing to be cold, it's another thing to be seriously ill and need critical care.

[Dr. Paul Garbe] Never use your oven to heat your home. It could be a source of carbon monoxide for you. It's dangerous. Don't do it.

[Dr. Fuyuen Yip] Make sure that their appliances and heating devices are properly vented and maintained by a professional.

[Dr. Paul Garbe] Dangers from poorly-maintained heating systems are really going to be the number one cause of carbon monoxide poisonings in the United States.

[Dr. Fuyuen Yip] CDC suggests that generators be placed outdoors.

[Dr. Paul Garbe] We recommend at least 25 feet away from your house. The best is as far away from your home as possible. So if, your power cord is 50 feet, I would put my generator 50 feet away from my house if I were using it.

[Announcer] There are actions to protect your family.

[Dr. Paul Garbe] CDC recommends that all homes have carbon monoxide detectors. I think it's a great investment. It's particularly important that you have carbon monoxide detectors near where people sleep at night. The worst location for a carbon monoxide detector is in the box without a battery.

[Dr. Fuyuen Yip] Most importantly, when you go to purchase a CO detector, make sure that it is specifically for carbon monoxide.

[Dr. Paul Garbe] The other important thing is that it's battery operated. If it is an A/C operated detector, it's important that it also have a battery back-up.

[Dr. Fuyuen Yip] Running your car in the garage, even with the garage door open, is not safe.

[Dr. Paul Garbe] If you have to get your car warmed up in the winter time, make sure it's parked in the driveway, well away from the house.

[Dr. Robert Geller] Carbon monoxide makes people sick; it kills people and is completely preventable.