

## Carbon monoxide alarms

Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms are not a substitute for proper installation and maintenance of gas appliances.

Make sure the alarm meets British Standard EN50291 and ideally has the British Standard Kitemark. You should install, check and service CO alarms according to the manufacturer's instructions.

CO alarms are available from DIY and hardware stores.

## Useful information

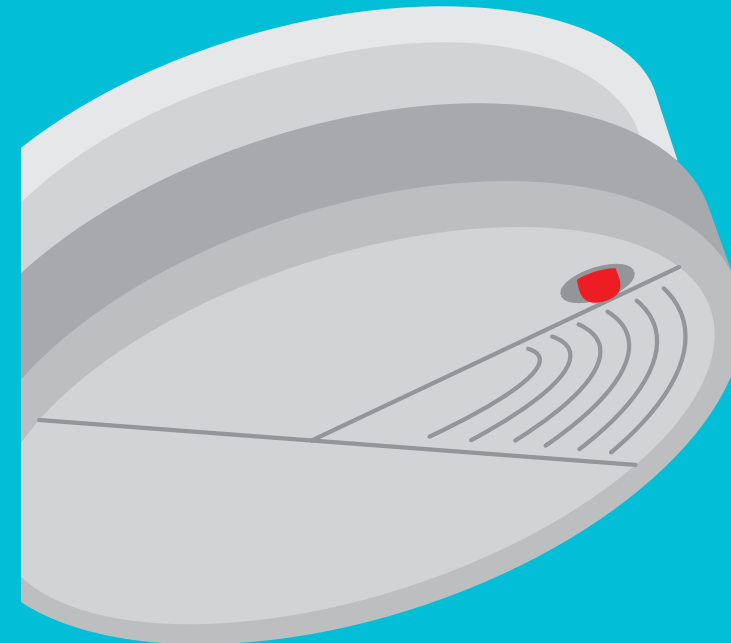
### Gas Safe register

To check if an engineer is on the register visit [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)



DEVON &  
SOMERSET  
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

# Carbon monoxide advice



## Contact us

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# Carbon monoxide (CO)

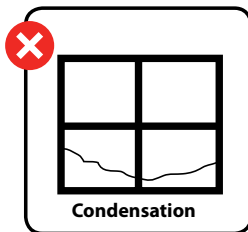
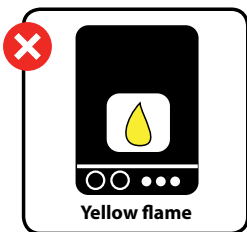
**Carbon monoxide (CO) is the most common form of household poison. You can't see it, you can't taste it and you can't smell it.**

CO gas is produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels, including gas, oil, wood and coal. Carbon-based fuels are safe to use. It is only when the fuel does not burn properly that excess CO is produced, which is poisonous.

Poisoning occurs when gas appliances and flues have not been properly installed, maintained or are poorly ventilated.

## The danger signs

- yellow or orange rather than blue flames (except fuel effect fires or flueless appliances which display this colour flame)
- soot or yellow/brown staining around or on appliances
- pilot lights that frequently blow out
- increased condensation inside windows.



## The symptoms

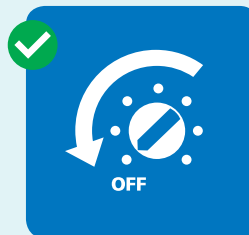
The early symptoms of poisoning can be easily confused with many common ailments and can develop quickly or over a number of days or months. Look out for:

- a headache – this is the most common symptom
- feeling sick and dizzy
- feeling tired and confused
- being sick and having stomach pain
- shortness of breath and difficulty breathing.

## Take action

If you think you have carbon monoxide poisoning, you should:

- seek urgent medical advice from either you GP or your A&E department
- open the windows and doors to ventilate the room, and don't sleep in it
- switch off all your gas appliances and don't use them again until the problem has been fixed



- shut off the gas supply at the meter control valve – if gas continues to escape, call the Gas Emergency free phone number on **0800 111 999**
- call a Gas Safe registered engineer to check all your gas appliances.

## Top tips for prevention

- Installation, repair and regular servicing of any gas and fossil fuel appliances, flues and chimneys should be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- Make sure you have good ventilation and enough fresh air in the room containing your gas appliance.
- Ensure chimneys/flues aren't blocked and vents aren't covered.
- Get your chimney swept from top to bottom at least once a year by a qualified sweep.

