

## **New Law Will Require Carbon Monoxide Detectors in All Homes**

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On February 1, 2011, Wisconsin's new carbon monoxide detector law will go into effect, requiring all homes to have a carbon monoxide detector.

Carbon monoxide is a dangerous, poisonous gas, which cannot be detected by human senses. Dubbed the "silent killer", carbon monoxide claims more than 2,000 lives each year and sends more than 40,000 people to the emergency room in the U.S. alone. At high concentrations, carbon monoxide can be fatal within minutes. Twenty-three other states already have laws requiring carbon monoxide alarms in residential properties.

This new law will expand the current carbon monoxide detector requirements to all one and two-family homes and parallels requirements for smoke alarms for ease of installation. Specifically, this new law will require carbon monoxide alarms to be installed in the basement of the dwelling and on each floor level except the attic or storage area of both newly constructed and existing homes. For new construction, the alarms must be hard-wired in order to be current with national model safety codes. For existing homes, the alarms can be battery operated and can be multi purpose (smoke and carbon monoxide). Dwellings with no attached garages, no fireplaces and no fuel-burning fireplaces are exempted from this requirement.

Similar to the smoke alarm law, the new carbon monoxide detector law does not have a fine or penalty associated with non-compliance. However, all home inspections will be required to check for carbon monoxide alarms.

For more information, please visit: <http://news.wra.org/story.asp?a=1302>.



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