Carbon Monoxide Safety Tips

The Moreno Valley Fire Department wants to remind residents about the importance of fire safety during the winter season. As temperatures drop, many City residents will use different methods to heat their homes, which, if not careful, can increase the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide (CO) is produced whenever any fuel such as gas, kerosene, oil, wood or charcoal is burned. When appliances that burn these fuels are not properly used or not maintained, the amount of CO produced can be extremely hazardous or even deadly.

Carbon Monoxide is commonly known as the "silent killer" because it is completely odorless, tasteless, and invisible. CO is the leading cause of unintentional poisoning deaths in America. Here are a few tips on how to prevent CO poisoning:

- Never use a gas oven, portable barbeque or range for space heating.
- Have your fuel burning appliances checked by a licensed heating contractor at the beginning of every heating season.
- Make sure the flues and chimneys are connected, in good condition and not blocked.
- Never store items in or around the appliance that can obstruct airflow.
- Never leave a car or lawn mower engine running in any enclosed space, garage or sheds.
- Install CO alarms outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home including the basement. The alarm will warn you if too much CO is in your home.

Some of the symptoms of CO poisoning include headaches, dizziness, nausea or fainting. If you experience symptoms that you think could be CO poisoning, here is what you should do:

- Call 911 or your local emergency number.
- Get fresh air immediately. Open doors and windows; turn off combustion appliances and leave the house.
- Do not re-enter the premises until cleared by emergency personnel.
- Go to the emergency room and tell the physician you suspect CO poisoning.

For other helpful tips and information, visit www.fire.ca.gov.