

Carbon monoxide can kill.



campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/campingsafety

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We hope your holiday will be fun and relaxing, but we are also aware that you may be cooking, heating and lighting your tent, awning, motorhome or caravan with equipment you may not use at home. This leaflet aims to raise awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from portable gas, charcoal, petrol and other liquid or solid fuel appliances that you may use on a campsite.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless gas. It is poisonous and produced when a fuel such as charcoal, gas or petrol burns incompletely. This could be because an appliance isn't working properly or might simply happen as part of its normal function. Charcoal barbecues, for example, produce CO even when they are working well.

The best advice is to avoid any chance of being poisoned in the first place:

Never take a barbecue into a tent, awning, caravan or motorhome. Even a cooling barbecue gives off plenty of poisonous carbon monoxide (CO), which can kill.

Never use a fuel-burning appliance to heat your tent or awning. Gas and kerosene heaters – unless they are permanently fitted in a caravan or motorhome – should only be used outside. Stoves and barbecues are designed for cooking not space heating.

Never run a gas-, petrol- or diesel-powered generator inside a caravan, motorhome, tent or awning. Make sure fumes from a generator do not blow into your unit, or anyone else's.

Don't cook inside your tent or awning, unless there's an area specifically designed for this purpose and you're sure there is adequate ventilation. To work safely gas, meths and petrol stoves need more ventilation than your tent or awning is designed to provide and there's also the risk of fire.

Don't use any other gas, charcoal, liquid or solid fuel appliances inside a tent or awning. Gas-powered fridges and lamps, for example, also need plenty of ventilation to prevent them producing poisonous carbon monoxide. Tents and awnings aren't generally designed with this in mind.

Consider using a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm, provided it is suitable for the environment in which it is being used. Check its suitability with the supplier/manufacturer first, though it should never be used as an alternative to the precautions above.

Always have gas appliances serviced regularly.

Spotting the danger signs of CO poisoning

You cannot smell, taste or see carbon monoxide but it can kill quickly and without warning. Early stages of carbon monoxide poisoning can give symptoms similar to food poisoning or flu, though without a high temperature.

Symptoms to look out for include:

Headaches; dizziness; feeling sick; tiredness and confusion; stomach pains or shortness of breath

Higher concentrations can give more severe symptoms:

Symptoms of intoxication; vertigo, as if the environment is spinning; loss of coordination; breathlessness and high heart beat rate; seizures or unconsciousness leading to death.

For more information

There is more information online at

nhs.uk/conditions/carbon-monoxide-poisoning or at carbonmonoxidekills.org.uk

You can also find out more at campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/campingsafety

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