



ABINGTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

OG - 300-101

Carbon Monoxide Detector Activations

1.0 PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for responding to Carbon Monoxide Detector Activations. This document applies to all Township Fire Companies.

Background:

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is colorless, odorless, lighter than air, gas that is formed as a result of incomplete combustion of carbon based fuels. Sources of CO include furnaces, gas fired hot water heaters and dryers, charcoal and propane grills and fireplaces. Carbon monoxide displaces oxygen in the blood stream. As CO builds up in the bloodstream symptoms such as confusion, dizziness, headache, nausea, unconsciousness, and weakness may occur, extreme over exposure to CO may cause death. The Target Organs affected by exposure to this material include cardiovascular system, lungs, blood, and central nervous system. The primary route of entry into the body is through inhalation.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility to ensure that the above actions are taken in an appropriate manner are defined as indicated below:

2.1 Company Members (CM)

2.2 Company Officers (CO)

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 Upon arrival on location the occupants should be interviewed and observed regarding signs and symptoms of CO poisoning. If the occupants are symptomatic Emergency Medical Services personnel should be notified immediately.

The occupants of the building should not be allowed in the building until it has been determined that the levels of CO present are below 35 parts per million.

3.2 Firefighters entering a building suspected of containing high levels of CO should:

3.2.1 Wear full turnout gear with self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).

- 3.2.2** Work in teams of not less than two persons.
- 3.2.3** Have at least one back-up team standing by to provide assistance as needed.
- 3.2.4** Carry appropriate air monitoring devices. Turn them on in a clean environment, away from running vehicles and other possible CO sources and make sure that they are functioning properly before making entry.
- 3.3** Check all areas of the occupancy for CO levels.
 - 3.3.1** Use the Carbon Monoxide Detector Activation Onsite Checklist during the investigation as a reminder of the actions to be performed.
 - 3.3.2** When it has been determined that the levels inside the occupancy are below 35 PPM the use of SCBA may be discontinued at the discretion of the Officer in Charge.
- 3.4** When the cause of the activation has been determined the occupants should be informed of the actions taken by Fire Department personnel.
- 3.5** If it is determined that the cause of the activation is a faulty gas appliance, the gas valve leading to the appliance should be shut off and the utility company should be notified of the actions taken.
- 3.6** If a source cannot be found and levels do not dissipate the main gas valve should be shut off and the utility company should be notified of the actions taken. Inform the occupants of the findings and provide information as to alternatives to reoccupying the building.

4.0 RECORDS

- 4.1** Carbon Monoxide Detector Activation Onsite Checklist.