



Home Tips®



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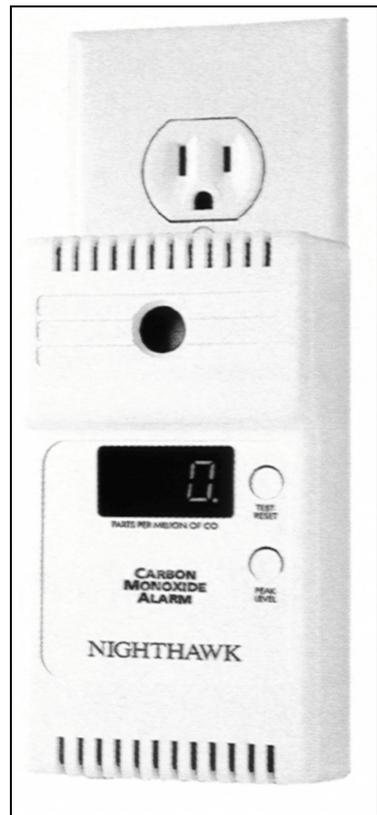
Q & A

Carbon Monoxide Safety?

Is it really a good idea to have a carbon monoxide detector or is it just a ploy to make more sales?

Early on the morning of May 5th, a Long Island physician returned home after working the late shift to find six friends and family members had died of carbon monoxide poisoning. The cause of this tragedy was a heating system that was both improperly installed and poorly maintained. A carbon monoxide detector, which might have averted the disaster, had been disabled the summer before because the alarm kept going off and waking everyone up.

According to the American Lung Association, nearly 300 people die every year from exposure to carbon monoxide (CO) in their homes. Thousands more are sickened enough to require medical attention. Low levels of exposure to carbon monoxide can cause fatigue; higher levels cause flu like symptoms such as headaches and nausea.



Any fuel-burning appliance that is not properly vented or maintained can be a source of carbon monoxide. To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning in the home, the American Lung Association (212-315-8700; www.lungusa.org) recommends taking the following steps:

- Make sure that appliances are installed

according to manufacturer's instructions and local building codes.

- Have all fuel-burning appliances, chimneys and flues inspected and serviced by a qualified technician every year.

- Make sure furnaces have adequate intake of outside air. Never have a furnace or water heater installed in a closet without having a louvered door or combustion air ducts located inside the closet.

- Install a carbon monoxide detector that meets current UL standard 2034 (carbon monoxide detectors made before 1998 tend to be overly sensitive and are subject to false alarms).

The Chimney Safety Institute of America (800-536-0118; www.csia.org) recommends each home should have at least two working carbon monoxide detectors; one near the furnace and one near the sleeping areas. As with smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors should be tested monthly to make sure they are working properly.

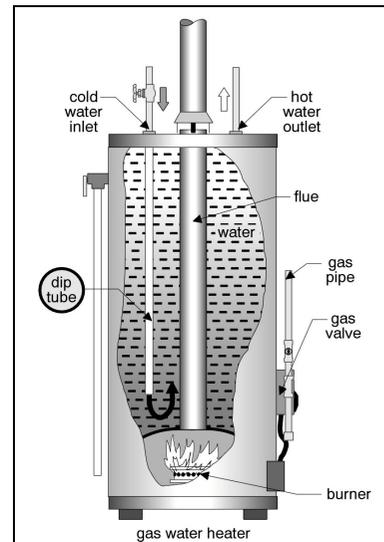
Source: Fine Homebuilding November 2000
<http://www.finehomebuilding.com>

Water Heater Dip Tubes?

What is the status of the Water Heater Dip Tube Class Action?

The class action expired on December 31, 2000. The manufacturers are no longer liable for defective dip tubes. For the people with water heaters manufactured between August 1993 and October 1996, if you experience problems as a result of dip tubes, you will have to pay for any repairs yourself.

If you notice a decrease in the amount of hot water, the efficiency of your water heater, or have particles blocking your faucets, your water heater's dip tube may have disintegrated. To perform a quick test, disconnect water lines on your washing machine and look for any white or gray particles in screens. If you find particles in the cold water line, they are probably not from your hot water heater. If you find particles in the hot water line or in the screen on your faucet, put them in standing water to see if they float.



Particles that float are from the dip tube. Another test is to apply heat to the particles. If the chips are from the dip tube, they will melt and the smoke will smell like plastic.

