

Carbon Monoxide Advice for Landlords

There's a reason carbon monoxide is often referred to as the 'silent killer' - because it has no scent, colour, or taste, and promptly causes unconsciousness.

In fact: the only way it can be detected is through installing a detector or by recognising the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, and with 25 deaths occurring in England and Wales every year due to accidental inhalation, it's an issue to be taken seriously.

How do carbon monoxide leaks occur?

For the most part, these leaks occur when household gas appliances such as stoves or water heaters malfunction, due to age or not being properly serviced and maintained. Improperly ventilated homes can also cause high levels of CO to build up.

What are the signs of a carbon monoxide leak?

It's worth checking the appliances in your property for anything that looks faulty or damaged if you suspect a gas leak, although keep in mind that there may be an issue that isn't immediately obvious. Some signs you may notice on your appliances are:

- Orange or yellow flames on a gas hob rather than blue
- Black staining/soot around the appliance
- More condensation on the inside of windows than normal (as this can be a sign that your appliance isn't venting properly)

It's also worth being aware of the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, in order to recognise them in yourself or your tenants. Symptoms may include:

- Physical tiredness/weakness
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Breathlessness
- Disorientation
- Loss of consciousness

If you notice your tenants displaying a number of these symptoms without a clear cause, it's important to open your doors and windows and vacate the premises while a check for a CO leak is conducted. It's also important for anybody displaying these symptoms to go hospital and be seen by a doctor.

What are a landlord's responsibilities when it comes to carbon monoxide?

The law requires all gas appliances to be checked and approved annually by a qualified gas engineer. It's important for landlords to ensure that those conducting the checks are on the Gas Safe register.