



## Brighton Fire Rescue District

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### **Firehouse Subs supports Brighton Fire with carbon monoxide detector grant**

BRIGHTON--Brighton Fire Rescue District was awarded a grant from Firehouse Subs which has allowed us to purchase carbon monoxide (CO) detectors for citizens of our community. The grant has helped us purchase just over 100 detectors that will be provided free of charge to citizens in need.

Brighton Fire currently has a smoke detector program and the CO detector program will be run in much the same way as the smoke detector program. If a citizen is in need of a detector they can call into the fire district and schedule to have a fire crew come to their home and help them determine their need. If they are in need of a CO detector, the crew will then help them determine the best placement in the home.

We will officially start the program on September 22, 2011 with a presentation at the Brighton Senior Center about the dangers of carbon monoxide and information about using detectors correctly. At that point anyone who thinks they may need a detector can call our main office at 303-659-4101 to schedule to have a fire crew come to their home to determine if they need a detector.

Not all homes, or apartments need to have a CO detector. If your home does not have fuel fired appliances or an attached garage you do not need a CO detector. In July of 2009 a new CO detector law was established that requires that "CO detectors be installed in all new dwelling units and in existing multi-family and single family dwelling units that include fuel fired appliances or an attached garage whenever they are sold, altered, or rented to a new tenant. Interior alterations include replacement of furnaces, water heaters and installation of air conditioners".

Carbon monoxide detectors should have a battery backup in case of power failure. They can be fully battery powered, plug-in with battery back-up, wired into the home's electrical system with a battery backup, or connected to an electrical system via an electrical panel. The detectors that we have at Brighton fire are the plug-in type with a battery backup. They should also be installed within 15 feet of the entry to each sleeping room, and installation must always comply with the manufactures instructions.

Many people may not understand why carbon monoxide is so dangerous. It is a gas that is about the same weight as air, which means it mixes evenly with the air in your home, and it is odorless. The reason it is so dangerous, is because once breathed in, it takes the place of oxygen molecules and more readily attaches to the blood cells. Those blood cells then deliver the poison to cells that are expecting oxygen. The carbon monoxide does not just leave your body after a few breaths, so prolonged exposure to the toxic gas can cause a buildup of carbon monoxide, while depleting the oxygen.

Signs of carbon monoxide poisoning are similar to flu symptoms, and therefore are hard to detect without testing. If you have carbon monoxide detector in your home that goes off, leave your home immediately. Do not use your phone, do not open windows. Evacuate all pets if you can do so quickly. Call 9-1-1 from outside your home. If your detector goes off and you have been feeling ill, seek medical attention immediately.

Without a carbon monoxide detector, you may think your poisoning symptoms are just the flu.