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### **PREVENT CARBON-MONOXIDE POISONING**

Each year about 500 people die from carbon-monoxide poisoning and another 15,000 are sickened with symptoms that can mimic the flu. Most carbon-monoxide tragedies occur in winter when people are desperate to heat their homes or cook during a power outage or if they're cut off from utilities.

Carbon monoxide – a colorless, odorless toxic gas created by incomplete combustion – can pose a danger any time homeowners use gas-fired and wood-burning units.

#### **FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE**

- Have fuel-burning appliances, furnaces, venting, and chimney systems checked annually by a qualified professional. That's especially important if it's been awhile since you've fired up your woodstove.
- Install carbon-monoxide alarms outside every bedroom and on every floor of your home according to the manufacturer's instructions. Because carbon-monoxide gas is lighter than oxygen (it rises), install detectors on the ceiling or high on a wall, if possible. Replace your carbon-monoxide detectors every five years.
- Never use cooking ranges or ovens in place of central heating.
- Never use charcoal grills, hibachis, or generators inside your home or garage (even if the door is open).

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**THREE CHEAP HEAT-SAVERS**

Rather than turning to potentially risky alternative heat sources, PEMCO urges you to take small, inexpensive steps to trim your utility bills safely:

- Install a programmable thermostat that automatically turns up the heat only when you're home. You can save 5% to 15% on your heating bill by turning your thermostat back 10 to 15 degrees for eight hours.
- Change furnace filters monthly (or according to manufacturer's instructions) during the heating season. Your furnace won't have to work as hard.
- Block drafts under doors and replace worn weather stripping around windows.