

# CO ALARMS – IT'S THE LAW ONTARIO



## Ontario's New Carbon Monoxide Alarm Law and What It Means To You



### Carbon Monoxide (CO) is known as 'The Silent Killer'

because you can't see it, taste it or smell it. The only way to detect the presence of the deadly gas is to install a carbon monoxide alarm.

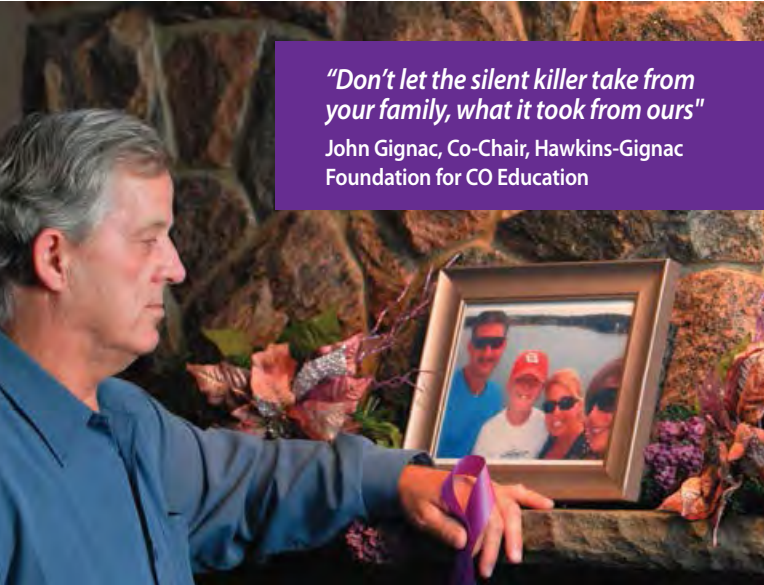
On October 15, 2014, the Ontario Government formally enacted a new law - **The Hawkins-Gignac Act** - making carbon monoxide alarms mandatory in all Ontario homes at risk of CO. This revision to the Ontario Fire Code, supersedes any existing municipal by-laws.

Now, no matter the age of your home, if you have any oil, propane or gas-burning appliances, furnace or water heater, a wood or gas fireplace, or an attached garage, you must have working carbon monoxide alarms installed near sleeping areas.

**Ontario's new CO alarm law brings a consistent level of protection to all Ontarians.**



**Install a CO alarm today  
and protect your family**



*"Don't let the silent killer take from your family, what it took from ours"*

John Gignac, Co-Chair, Hawkins-Gignac  
Foundation for CO Education

### Tragedy in Woodstock the Catalyst for New Carbon Monoxide Law

In December, 2008 tragedy struck my family in Woodstock, Ontario. My niece Laurie, her husband Richard, and two children Cassie and Jordan were killed by carbon monoxide poisoning. The vent leading from their gas fireplace was clogged so the deadly gas seeped back into their home.

They didn't know they were in danger because they did not have a carbon monoxide alarm. This tragic event has served as the catalyst for the new CO alarm law, which is named in our family's honour.

### Carbon Monoxide Sources

Carbon monoxide can be emitted if fuel burning devices are improperly installed or poorly maintained. Vents and flues must also be free of debris and not cracked or clogged. It can originate from gas, oil or propane furnaces, water heaters, clothes dryers, space heaters, gas ovens and wood burning or gas fireplaces.



# CO Safety Tips to Protect Your Family



Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman celebrates the new law with John Gignac.

- It is law in Ontario to install carbon monoxide alarms outside sleeping areas.
- CO alarms are required by law to be replaced within the time frame indicated in the manufacturer's instructions and/or on the label on the unit. Some new CO alarms offer sealed lithium batteries that last 10 years from activation.
- For optimal protection, install additional CO alarms on every floor of the home.
- Have a licenced technician inspect your fuel burning appliances annually, (eg. furnace, range, fireplace, water heater) to ensure they are in proper working order and vented correctly.
- For families with older parents or relatives, it is wise to help them inspect their CO alarms.
- CO alarms don't last forever. They need to be replaced every 7-10 years, depending on the brand.
- If your alarm goes off get everyone out of the house, stay out and call 911! Exposure to CO reduces your ability to think clearly, so never delay if your alarm goes off and you sense a problem.

## Symptoms of CO Exposure

Early symptoms of CO poisoning include headache, nausea and fatigue and are often mistaken for the flu. Carbon monoxide is known to disorient its victims and is most dangerous when people are sleeping and fail to wake up or realize they are at risk. Prolonged exposure to carbon monoxide can lead to brain damage and death.



## CO Alarms...To Get the Early Warning You Need

**A CO alarm is the only way to detect deadly CO gas, providing the early warning needed, before tragedy strikes.**

When buying a CO alarm, look for models with 10 year sealed lithium batteries that last the life of the alarm. Also, consider an alarm with a digital display screen that will show you the CO level in your home. This makes it easier to spot changes in your home's air quality that could indicate a potential problem.



Look for the CSA and Blueflame 6.19-01 marks. These guarantee the CO alarm meets all the latest and required Canadian safety standards.



For More Information go to

[www.endthesilence.ca](http://www.endthesilence.ca) [www.safeathome.ca](http://www.safeathome.ca)  
[www.kiddecanada.com](http://www.kiddecanada.com)