

CARBON MONOXIDE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN	5th December 2017
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE	
FOR INFORMATION	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Health and Wellbeing
Outcome	Carbon Monoxide Awareness Campaign
Lead Officer	Head of Health & Built Environment
Cost: (If applicable)	-

November was Carbon Monoxide Awareness Month, and the Environmental Services Directorate in conjunction with the Public Health Agency supported the campaign to take steps to minimize the risk of CO poisoning by issuing the press release below via the Councils PR section.

Carbon Monoxide can kill and in the winter months, when people use their heating appliances more frequently, there are often more poisoning incidents.

To minimise the risk:

- sweep chimneys and flues every year if you use solid fuel;
- keep flues, air vents and grilles clear and ensure rooms are well ventilated;
- if you are in rented accommodation that incorporates gas appliances, ask your landlord to provide you with an up-to-date gas safety record. This is a requirement by law and is particularly important for students renting houses and flats;
- install an audible carbon monoxide alarm that meets British or European standards (BS Kitemark or EN 50291). These cost as little as £20 and can be purchased from large DIY stores and food retail stores. Alarms however, should not be used as a substitute for regular servicing of appliances.

Adding her support to the campaign, the Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Councillor Joan Baird OBE said: “We would urge everyone to follow these guidelines and help protect themselves from this silent killer. Carbon Monoxide can be very hard to detect, and November’s awareness campaign is an important way to educate people about its potentially deadly effects.”

Carbon monoxide is produced when fossil fuels such as gas, coal, oil, wood, petrol and paraffin burn without enough oxygen. It is a colourless, tasteless, odourless gas that is non-irritating. Carbon monoxide poisoning can be fatal and affect anyone. However, children, students, older people, pregnant women and anyone with heart or breathing problems are more vulnerable to its effects.

The signs and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are often mistaken for other illnesses such as food poisoning or flu – the symptoms can be similar to flu but without a raised temperature.

Anyone who suspects they may be experiencing carbon monoxide poisoning should immediately turn off all appliances, go outside and seek medical help from a qualified healthcare professional. Appliances should not be used again until they have been serviced by a registered engineer.

The information was issued to local newspapers, and posted on the council website and social media pages.