



State assembly passes carbon monoxide detector bill

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Madison (WQOW) - The Wisconsin State Assembly passed Senate Bill 415 with a bipartisan vote of 67 to 29 today. Rep. Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh) was the lead sponsor for the Carbon Monoxide Detector Bill which requires carbon monoxide detectors to be placed in buildings containing one or two dwelling units. Earlier today this legislation passed the Senate. The next step will be for this bill to go to Governor Doyle to be signed into law.

"I co-authored this legislation with Senator Hansen after it was brought to my attention that there is a gap in our law requiring carbon monoxide detectors in residences in Wisconsin", said Rep. Hintz. "Every year over 2,000 deaths and more than 40,000 injuries are caused by carbon monoxide in the United States alone, and we in Wisconsin are particularly susceptible given our cold climate".

Last session, the Legislature passed legislation which required carbon monoxide alarms in all multi-family homes, hotels, bed and breakfast establishments, or any public building that is used for sleeping or lodging purposes. However, 72% of all non-fire carbon monoxide incidents reported to Fire Departments in 2005 occurred in one-or-two family dwellings. This bill expands current law to require CO alarms in **all** one- and two-family homes and parallels requirements for smoke alarms for ease of installation.

"Passage of this bill will result in prevention of carbon monoxide poisoning and deaths in our State, said Rep. Hintz. "I thank my colleagues for their support of this lifesaving measure."

Carbon monoxide is known as the "silent killer" since the gas is undetectable by the human senses. At high concentrations in surrounding atmosphere, carbon monoxide can be fatal within minutes. This is illustrated by recent tragic deaths of a family of three in Quebec on December 30th. The family died in their sleep and the cause of death was determined to be carbon monoxide that had built up due to improper ventilation of an emergency generator used during a power outage. The home did not have a carbon monoxide detector.

Currently, twenty-four states already have laws requiring CO alarms in residential properties. This bill is strongly supported by many groups and organizations across the state including:

- Safe Kids Wisconsin
- the Professional Fire Fighters of Wisconsin
- the Wisconsin Builders Association
- the Wisconsin State Fire Chief's Association
- Wisconsin Realtors Association

This legislation would take effect on February 1, 2011.



MEDIA CONTACTS:

Jay Wadd, Office of Sen. Dave Hansen – 608.266.5670

Cecely Castillo, Office of Rep. Gordon Hintz – 608.266.2254

Annie Rubens, WI Builders Association – 608.242.5151 x19

Lt. Nick Craig, Green Bay Fire Department – 920.621.1933

John Holland, Oshkosh Fire Department – 920.379.3525

WISCONSIN FIRE OFFICIALS, STATE LEGISLATORS, SAFETY AND INDUSTRY LEADERS JOIN TO RAISE AWARENESS OF STATE CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM LAWS

March 10, 2010, Green Bay, WI— Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay), Representative Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh), the Wisconsin Builders Association (WBA), Safe Kids Wisconsin, Green Bay and Oshkosh Fire Departments, State Fire Chiefs Association, and the Wisconsin Realtors Association joined together today to raise awareness of new state laws that will help protect Wisconsin residents from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

Later today, Governor Jim Doyle is anticipated to take action on SB 415, which will require carbon monoxide alarms in all new and existing one- and two-family residences having a fuel burning appliance, fireplace or an attached garage beginning February 1, 2011. A previously passed law, effective April 1, 2010, requires CO alarms in all multi-family dwellings having a fuel burning appliance.

“While the original law signed by Governor Doyle was an important safety protection for multiple family dwellings, SB 415 was necessary to extend this same protection to all homes,” said Rep. Hintz, lead Assembly sponsor of SB 415. **“This legislation will ensure that families across our state are protected from carbon monoxide poisoning.”**

“By working with fire officials and homebuilders, we were able to illustrate why everyone needs to have a CO alarm,” added Senator Hansen. **“This new law will improve public safety, save lives and save tax dollars by reducing the number of emergency calls for carbon monoxide related incidents.”**

At the press event, Kidde, the leading manufacturer of residential fire safety products, including carbon monoxide alarms, announced a donation of 400 carbon monoxide alarms that will be distributed to the Green Bay and Oshkosh Fire Departments, as well as Safe Kids Wisconsin and the Brown County and Winnebago Home Builders Associations, for installation in low-income homes.

“WBA’s support of the requirement of carbon monoxide detectors in homes is another example of WBA member’s efforts to construct safe, affordable, and energy efficient homes,” said Wisconsin Builders Association President Jim “Kuba” Kubasta.

Carbon monoxide is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in America, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Produced when fuel is burned, carbon monoxide is emitted by common fuel-burning appliances such as furnaces, water heaters, fireplaces, and stoves. Additional sources may include improperly ventilated generators, space heaters, fireplaces, barbecue grills, and car exhaust.

“The only safe way to detect this colorless, odorless gas in your home is with a working carbon monoxide alarm,” said Libbe Slavin, Safe Kids Wisconsin Coordinator. **“If you don’t have a CO alarm in your home, I urge you to install one today. Don’t wait for the law to take effect.”**

For more information about the new law and how to protect your family from carbon monoxide, visit Knowaboutco.com.

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