

## KAREN CHRISTIAN LEADER' S NEWSLETTER

### Emergency Bulletin!

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#### **Carbon Monoxide Poisoning.**

Two Karen teenagers died in Fort Wayne, Indiana on December 26, 2009 because they sat in a car with the motor running in a closed garage. They died and were found the next morning. Especially in the winter when it is so cold, it is tempting to sit in cars with the motor and heater running. Do not do this. When a car motor runs, it produces carbon monoxide which will kill people by putting them to sleep. It is especially dangerous to run a car motor in a garage with the doors closed like the two teens did in Ft. Wayne. But even if the car is parked outside, it is dangerous to sit in it with the motor running.

When a car burns gasoline, it produces water, carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide. Water and carbon dioxide are harmless but carbon monoxide is deadly. It is a poisonous gas, killing quickly without warning. It has no smell and kills by chemically combining with the red blood cells and preventing these cells from carrying oxygen throughout the body particularly to the brain. A person being poisoned by carbon monoxide is conscious and then suddenly becomes unconscious and dies.

Carbon monoxide poisoning happens generally in two ways. If a car is started in a confined space such as a garage, the exhaust quickly fills the garage with this deadly gas. Always open the big garage door BEFORE starting the car. A person can die between the car and walking to open the door.

The second way is for the car to have a faulty muffler and exhaust (tail pipe) system. If it has holes in it, the carbon monoxide can go into the car and kill. Usually the car is moving and the wind traveling under the car will carry the gas away. But sometimes the wind eddy patterns will carry the gas into the car with deadly effects. Some of the accidents said to be the result of the driver falling asleep at the wheel are really due to the driver being overcome by carbon monoxide and the dying from the gas that causes the wrecking of the car.

A car stuck in the snow can confine the gases under it and then the gases filter into the car with deadly results. Particularly if the car spins into a snow bank entering it rear first so that the tail pipe is buried in the snow. The snow blocks the exhaust resulting in the gas accumulating under the car where it comes into the car.

Carbon monoxide gas can be a problem if the heat exchange on an old furnace cracks which then feeds the gas into the house. Gas grills or carbon brick grills should never be used inside the house because in the right conditions, they can produce carbon monoxide gas too.