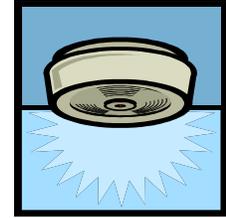


# CO DETECTORS & THEIR END OF LIFE SIGNAL



All carbon monoxide detectors, when put into service, have a life expectancy. In the past it has been anywhere from 3-7 years. Underwriter Labs, on February 28, 2008, published a new standard requiring all carbon monoxide detectors have an “end of life signal”. On August 1, 2009, this standard became mandatory. Now, homeowners will know when their detector needs replacement. The end-of-life signal is determined by one of two different criteria: a self-diagnostic check or an internal timer. Below is what the homeowner should know:

There are three types of signals from CO detectors:

**Alarm signal:** audible and visual signal intended to indicate the presence of CO. This signal is 4 cycles of 100 milliseconds “on”, 100 milliseconds “off”, then a pause of 5 seconds. After 4 minutes, the 5 second “off” may be increased to 60 seconds. This signal continues until unit is manually silenced or CO dissipates. There should be a visual indicator located on the face of the unit.

**Trouble signal:** Visual and audible signal, differing from alarm signal, indicating fault or trouble condition. Audible signal is short beep, not more than 0.5 second, repeating once every 30 to 60 seconds. Signal continues until trouble condition is corrected.

**End-of-Life Signal:** Audible signal, differing from alarm signal, indicating device has reached the end of its useful life and should be replaced. Signal may be same as trouble signal, providing device has visual indicator to differentiate trouble and end-of-life signals. Signal shall repeat once every 30 to 60 seconds. Now, if your carbon monoxide detector sounds a signal, by looking at the manufacturing date, you can better determine what type of signal it is.

**Silencing End-of-Life Signal:** For units that generate a signal from internal timer, timer can be reset for a max of 72 hours if self-diagnostic tests indicate device meets requirements of standard. Timer can be reset for up to 30 days after initial end-of-life signal. For units employing a self-diagnostic test to sound the end-of-life signal, device can not be reset or silenced.

Other things you should know:

Look at your device. It will have a date of manufacture on it. It will be in the format of YEAR (in 4 digits), MONTH (in letters), and DAY (in 2 digits) located on the outside surface of the CO detector.

There is a requirement for distinction between alarm, end-of-life, and trouble signals on units employing these signals. But, if there is an indicating light on the face of the unit, one for trouble and one for end-of-life, the audible signals will probably be the same for both. The difference is which light is on. The end-of-life information shall include details on how long the unit may be expected to last and shall indicate if the end-of-life is based on the date the unit was manufactured or the date that the user places the unit into service.

Remember, there is a time frame between publishing the standard (February 28, 2008) and making the standard mandatory (August 1, 2009) Units manufactured between these dates MAY contain this end-of-life signal or MAY NOT.

If you have any questions on these requirements, call 847-540-5073 for additional information.