

Tragic deaths: 81 & 63 yr. old women, due to Carbon Monoxide in Willowbrook (about 8 Miles east of Mar Vista). Even when cold, never heat home with oven.

Two women tragically lost their lives in Willowbrook when they apparently used their kitchen oven to provide heat inside their home. They were found Saturday at about 4:30PM. Preliminarily, Carbon monoxide fumes from the oven are believed to have resulted in their deaths.

At 4:30 PM, 01/01/10, deputies from Century Sheriff's Station responded to a rescue call in the 2200 block of El Segundo Boulevard, Willowbrook.

When they arrived, they were met by a family member who told them that after not receiving a response to phone calls, she drove there in order to check on the 63-year old woman and her 81 year-old mother. The family member said she went inside the residence and immediately smelled a strong odor of gas. She found the oven to be turned on and closed the oven door before quickly exiting the residence. She then called Century Sheriff's Station of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for emergency help.

Hearing the family member's concerns and observations, deputies quickly entered the residence and found the two victims apparently deceased.

Los Angeles County Fire Department firefighters also responded and detected extremely high levels of carbon monoxide within the residence. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Homicide investigators responded to the residence to conduct their investigation. Century Sheriff's Station on-call clergy personnel were also summoned to the scene and assisted deputies with grieving family members.

Preliminarily, it appears as though the victims had opened the oven door and turned the oven on in order to heat their residence. Carbon Monoxide is clear, odorless and colorless. The Los Angeles County Fire Department and experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advise against ever using a gas range, gas stove, kerosene/ propane space heater, or charcoal grill to heat your home or apartment. Carbon Monoxide is produced by the incomplete combustion of the fossil fuels - gas, oil, coal and wood used in boilers, engines, oil burners, gas fires, water heaters, solid fuel appliances and open fires.

Follow these safety tips from Los Angeles County Fire Department to prevent injuries and deaths related to heating your home. List of items and safety recommendations:

1. Install Smoke alarm near bedrooms and on each floor of your home.
2. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends carbon monoxide alarm system to be included near bedrooms and on each floor of your home.
3. Make sure heating equipment is installed properly. Have a trained specialist or your local Gas Company inspector inspect and tune up your heating system each year.
4. Keep portable space heaters at least 3 feet from anything that can burn, including bedding, furniture, and clothing.
5. Always use a space heater that is equipped with an automatic shut-off when tipped over.
6. Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
7. Have your fireplace chimney and flue inspected each year and cleaned if needed.

Never use your range or oven to heat your home, even for a short time.