

**Visual Property Inspection**

1451 Queen St E  
Toronto, ON M4L 1E2

**Prepared for :**

The Weir Team

Phone No. : (416) 465-4545



**Inspected by :**

Allen Ottaway  
160 Goodman Dr.

Oshawa, Ontario L1J 7V8

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# Report Commentary

Date: 17-Jun-2016

1451 Queen St E, Toronto, ON M4L 1E2

This summary is not the entire report. The complete report may include additional information of concern to the client. It is recommended that the client read the entire report.

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## 1.0 Exterior

### 1.1 **Exterior Walls**

Repair shingles being used as siding to prevent water entry and related damages.

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## 2.0 Roof Structure

### 2.1 **Covering**

Torched down membrane is 10 years old and has reached its typical life expectancy. Check on an annual basis and replace as required to prevent water entry and related damages.

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## 3.0 Electrical Service

### 3.1 **Service Size**

100 amp service, copper wire.

### 3.2 **Circuit Wires/Receptacles**

Install a GFCI receptacle on the rooftop patio to promote safety.

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## 4.0 Heating

### 4.1 **Heating Fuel Source**

Boiler is in good condition.

### 4.2 **AC**

AC unit is 8 years old and functioning at time of inspection. Typical life expectancy is 15 years.

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## 5.0 Plumbing Components

### 5.1 **Hot Water Tank**

8 year old rental water heater is functioning as intended at time of inspection.

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## 6.0 Interior Living Spaces

### 6.1 **Window**

Windows are in good condition.

Property and Site

**Limitations**

- Vegetation/Tree/Shrub       Vines       Debris/Obstruction  
 Snow/Ice Cover  
AGE OF HOME 10 years

**Conditions**

- Sunny/Mostly Sunny       Cloudy/Mostly Cloudy       Rain/Wet Conditions  
 Snow/Ice Conditions  
Approx. Temperature 31 celsius

**Building**

- 3 Story       Duplex       Condo       Townhome

Recommend CO detector installation as required by law within 15 feet of all bedrooms for occupant safety.

All smoke detectors over 10 years old should be replaced for safety as a precautionary measure. Some have a limited lifespan and older technology detectors are not as effective as newer ones.

Inspection limited by furnishings throughout the home including but not limited to furniture, blinds, curtains, wall & floor coverings, possibly fresh paint, boxes, appliances, clothes, items stored under some or all sinks, and storage items

This is not a building code inspection. Local codes, city and county, can vary significantly and change regularly over time, and are not a part of this home inspection.

**Landscaping**

- Bushes/Hedge/Flower Bed       Vine       Slopes To House

**Front Porch**

- Crack       Wood/Composite       Concrete       Brick/Block/Paving Stone  
 Metal

**Front Porch Rail**

- Wood       Metal       Composite

**Front Porch Light**

- Unsecured       Appears to be sensor activated       Representative # Inspected/Tested

**Operational**

**Deck(s)/Patio(s)**

- Slopes to House       Wood/Composite       Paving Stone/Block/Brick  
 Typical Cracking       Concrete

**Exterior**

**Limitations**

- Insulation Conceals
- Obstructed/No or Partial Access
- Clearance
- Bushes/Vines/Tree Obstructions
- Debris/Obstruction
- Snow/Ice Cover

**Foundation Wall**

- Stone/Flagstone
- Preserved Wood
- Completely Concealed
- Brick
- Partially Concealed
- Concrete
- Block
- Hairline Cracking-typical

**Exterior Walls**

- Wood/Composite
- On Wood Framing
- Stucco
- Vinyl/Aluminum
- Brick/Stone

*Repair shingles being used as siding to prevent water entry and related damages.*

**Window Exterior**

- Wood
- Metal
- Vinyl
- Wood Int/Vinyl or Metal Cla

**Garage Side or Back Door**

- Dented/Minor Damage
- Binds - Adjust/repair

**Operational**

**Exterior Lighting**

- Unsecured - repair
- Representative # Inspected/Tested

**Operational**

**Garage**

**Type**

- Detached   
  Attached   
  Built-In   
  1 Car   
  2 Car   
  3 Car   
  4 Car

**Door**

- Automatic   
  Manual   
  1 Automatic & 1 Manu   
  Wood   
 **Operational**  Metal

**Floor**

- Cracking - Typical - Seal   
  Movement/Heaving   
  Concrete   
  Asphalt/Gravel  
 Partially Concealed

**Wall**

- Drywall/Plaster   
 Wood   
 Stone/Brick   
 Partially Concealed   
 concrete

**Window**

- Binds   
 Damaged   
 Obstructed/ Not Tested   
**Operational**

**Ceiling**

- Crack   
 Drywall/Plaster   
 Wood

**Lighting**

- Unsecured   
 Representative # Inspected/Tested   
**Operational**

**Access Door**

- Auto Door Close To Storage room   
 Wood   
 Metal/Fiberglass   
**Operational**

## Roof Structure

### Inspected By:

- Binocular     Roof Edge     Walk On     No Access

### Limitations

- Deck/Patio     Solar Panels     Gravel Cover     Steep Slope     Height  
 Snow/Ice Cover     Rain - Too Slippery     Material Too Slippery

Condition of torched down membrane under decking is unknown.

### Main Roof

- Flat     Gable     Hip/Valley     Shed

Estimated Age 10 years

### Gutter/Downspout

- Galvanized     Plastic     Aluminum     Copper     Below Ground Discharge  
 Above Ground Discharge

Extend all downspouts away from foundation to reduce wall deterioration, potential water entry and subsequent damages.

### Fascia/Soffit

- Moisture Staining evident - Monitor     Aluminum/Vinyl     Wood

### Covering

- Concrete/Clay Tile     Wood Shingle/Wood Shake     Asphalt/Composite Shingle  
 Metal     Other     Flat Roof Membrane     Tar & Grav

*Torched down membrane is 10 years old and has reached its typical life expectancy. Check on an annual basis and replace as required to prevent water entry and related damages.*

### Life Expectancy

- Typical     Middle     End     Exceeded

### Accessory

- Vent Stack     Solar Panels     Skylight(s)     Vent Caps

### Flashing

- Not Checked/Concealed     Chimney     Drip Edge     Flat Roof     Skylight  
 Roof to Wall     Stack     Valley     Roll Roofing     Replace When Re-roofing  
 Aluminum/Galvanized     Tarring/Concealed

**Electrical Service**

**Service Entrance**

No Conduit     Overhead     Underground     120/240V

**Entrance Cable**

Concealed     Aluminum     Copper

**Main Disconnect**

Switch/Cartridge Fuse     Breaker

**Service Size**

Have Electrician Evaluate

Amps 100

*100 amp service, copper wire.*

**Distribution Panel**

Not Opened     Non Standard Installation     Obstructed

Location Garage

**Panel Rating**

Room For Expansion

Amps 125

**Fuse**

Breaker     GFCI Breaker     AFCI Breaker     Over-Fused     Cartridge     Glass

**Circuit Wires/Receptacles**

Aluminum     Copper     Representative # of Outlets Inspected/Tests     Switched Outlets

*Install a GFCI receptacle on the rooftop patio to promote safety.*

**Grounding**

Concealed     Ground Rod     Water Main

**Bonding**

Concealed     Water Pipe     Gas Pipe     Meter By-Pass

Heating

**Limitations**

- System Operating In AC Mode       System Shut Down/Not Tested

**Smoke Detectors**

- Basement       1st Floor       2nd Floor       3rd Floor

**Thermostat/Humidistat**

- Unsecured       Programmable       Standard

**Operational**

**Heat Type**

- Convector - Wall Unit       Forced Air       Radiator/Baseboard  
 Radiant - In-Floor

**Heating Fuel Source**

- Gas       Electric       Propane       Boiler

*Boiler is in good condition.*

Consult with a qualified heating technician to further investigate circulating pump being held together with tape.

**Fuel Source Shut Off Location**

- Beside

**Heating System**

- Advise Service/Repair Contract       Verify Service Hist w/Selle

**Operational**

**Fresh Air Supply**

- Internal       External

**Venting**

- Metal       Corrosion       Sidewall/Plastic       Flue

**Life Expectancy**

- Typical       Middle       Exceeded       Middle/End

**Motor/Blower**

- Direct Drive       Noisy       Other

**Operational**

**Filter**

- Disposable       Missing       Inoperable       Undersized       Damaged

**Duct/Joint/Housing**

- Unsecured       Corrosion





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## Heating

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### AC

**Operational**

Not Checked     Dirty     Central     Room Unit  
Approx. Age 8 years                      Approx Size - Tons 1.5

*AC unit is 8 years old and functioning at time of inspection. Typical life expectancy is 15 years.*

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### Cooling Fuel Source

Electric

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### Condensation Line

Improper Drain     Corrosion

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### Refrigerant Line

Unsecured     Not Insulated

## Plumbing Components

### Limitation

- Finished Basement  Private System

### Public Supply

- Concealed  Lead  Galvanized  Plastic  Copper  Metered  
 Not Metered

Shut Off Location: Furnace room

### Public Shut-Off Valve

- Not Tested  Corrosion  Tagged/Labeled for Convenience

### Water Pressure

- Low  Typical  High

### Water Quality

- Discoloration  Debris  Odor  Advise Well Water Quality Tes  Typical

### Distribution Piping

- Concealed  Plastic  Galvanized  Copper

### Cross Connection

- Kitchen  Laundry  Hose Bibb  None Visible

### Waste Drainage

- Concealed  Cast Iron  Plastic  Copper  Pump/Inspect Septic System

### Floor Drain

- None - a potential concern  Drain Appeared Functional During Test

### Main Cleanout

- Concealed

### Hot Water Tank

- With Heating System  Gas  Electric  Some Corrosion Noted - Typical  
Age 8 years Estimated Capacity -Litres 108

### Operational

*8 year old rental water heater is functioning as intended at time of inspection.*

Consult with a qualified technician to further investigate rusting and staining on the tank to prevent premature failure .

### Life Expectancy

- Typical  Exceeded  Middle  Middle/End

**Plumbing Components**

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**Fuel Shut-Off**

Concealed  
Location beside

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**Relief Valve**

No Test Lever     Corrosion     Other

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**Discharge Tube**

Undersized     Discharge

**Laundry**

**Wall**

- Patched     Unfinished     Crack - Typical     Uneven

**Ceiling**

- Patched     Unfinished     Crack - Typical     Uneven

**Door**

- Binds     Damaged/Hole in Door

**Operational**

**Lighting**

- None     Unsecured

**Operational: No**

Determine cause of inoperable light fixture and repair as required. Replace bulb prior to further investigation.

**Trap/Drain**

- Drain stop disconnected/inoperable-repair     Inoperable Trap     Slow Drain     Corrosion

**Washer**

- Tested On/Off Function Only  
Make SN# SR606460W

**Operational: Yes**

All appliances were turned on using regular operating controls if they are connected or not shut down. All functions and different systems are not tested. The test simply comprises turning the appliances on to verify some basic functionality.

**Dryer**

- Tested On/Off Function Only

**Operational: Yes**

**Dryer Vent**

- Unsecured     To Crawlspace     Mostly Concealed     Plastic Duct

Dryer vent cleaning is recommended to increase efficiency and for fire safety. Inspect/clean on a regular basis.

Interior of dryer vent condition concealed-not inspected

3rd floor

All Baths

**Location**

- Basement   
  1st Floor   
  2nd Floor   
  3rd Floor

**Water Flow**

- Normal   
  Suspect   
  Low

**Floor**

- Worn   
  Minor Cracking - Typical   
  Stains/Minor Damage

**Wall**

- Uneven   
  Patched - Typical   
  Ceramic

**Ceiling**

- Uneven   
  Minor Patching - Typical   
  Minor Cracking - Typical

**Door**

- Binds - Adjust/Repair   
  Damaged   
  Representative # Inspected/Tested

**Operational**

**Lighting**

- None   
  Unsecured

**Operational**

**Exhaust Fan**

- Advise Installation   
  Dirty - Clean for best function   
  Noisy - Service/Repair/Replace

**Operational**

**Sink**

- Worn   
  Chip/Scratch   
  Steel/Ceramic   
  Solid/Granite

**Faucet**

- No Shut-off   
  Unsecured   
  Corrosion   
  Minor Leakage at Handle - Repair

**Operational**

**Trap/Drain**

- Drain stop disconnected/inoperable-Repair   
  Slow Drain/Clean/Repair   
  Corrosion - Monitor for leaks

**Vanity**

- Worn/Scratches   
  Missing/Loose Hardware   
  Prior Stains-No Leakage Now

**Counter**

- Unsecured   
  Minor Damage - Scratches/Stains   
  Caulk at Backsplash

**Toilet**

- No Shut-Off   
  Unsecured   
  Crooked - Monitor for leakage

**Operational**

Secure toilet to reduce secondary water damages

3rd floor

All Baths

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**Tub/Enclosure**

- Ceramic/Tile     Solid Surface/Marble     Fiberglass     Plastic Panels  
 Minor Mildew Stains-Treat/Clean     Worn - Scratches/Chips

Caulk tub surround to reduce water penetration and subsequent deterioration.

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**Tub Faucet/Mixer**

- Not Tested     Unsecured     Leaky-Secure/Repair/Replace

**Operational**

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**Shower Head**

- Not Tested     Unsecured     Leaky-Secure/Repair/Replace

**Operational**

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**Heat Source**

- None     Thermostat     Electric     Air Register     Radiant  
 Radiator/Convactor

**Location**

Basement  1st Floor  2nd Floor  3rd Floor

**Water Flow**

Normal  Suspect  Low

**Floor**

Worn  Minor Cracking - Typica  Stains/Minor Damage

**Wall**

Uneven  Patched - Typical  Minor Cracking - Typica

**Ceiling**

Uneven  Minor Patching - Typical  Minor Cracking - Typica

**Door**

Binds - Adjust/Repair  Minor Damage/Hole In Door  Representative # Inspected/Tested

**Operational: Yes****Lighting**

None  Unsecured

**Operational: Yes****Exhaust Fan**

Advise Installation  Dirty - Clean for best function  Noisy - Service/Repair/Replace

**Operational: Yes****Sink**

Worn  Chip/Scratch  Steel/Ceramic  Solid/Granite

**Faucet**

No Shut-off  Unsecured  Corrosion  Minor Leakage at Handle - Repair

**Operational: Yes****Trap/Drain**

Drain stop disconnected/inoperable  Slow Drain - Clean/Repair  Corrosion - Monitor for leaks

**Vanity**

Worn/Scratches  Missing/Loose Hardware  Prior Stains-No Leakage Now

**Counter**

Unsecured  Minor Damage - Scratches/Stains  Caulk at Backsplash

**Toilet**

No Shut-Off  Unsecured  Crooked - Monitor for leakage

**Operational: Yes**

Secure toilet to reduce secondary water damages

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**Tub/Enclosure**

- Ceramic/Tile     Solid Surface/Marble     Fiberglass     Plastic Panels  
 Minor Mildew Stains-Treat/Clean     Worn - Scratches/Chips

Caulk tub surround to reduce water penetration and subsequent deterioration.

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**Tub Faucet/Mixer**

- Not Tested     Unsecured     Leaky-Secure/Repair/Replace

**Operational:    Yes**

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**Shower Head**

- Not Tested     Unsecured     Leaky-Secure/Repair/Replace

**Operational:    Yes**

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**Heat Source**

- None     Thermostat     Electric     Air Register     Radiant  
 Radiator/Convactor



## Powder room

**Location**

Basement  1st Floor  2nd Floor  3rd Floor

**Water Flow**

Normal  Suspect  Low

**Floor**

Worn  Minor Cracking - Typica  Stains/Minor Damage

**Wall**

Uneven  Patched - Typical  Minor Cracking - Typica

**Ceiling**

Uneven  Minor Patching - Typical  Minor Cracking - Typica

**Door**

Binds - Adjust/Repair  Minor Damage/Hole In Door  Representative # Inspected/Tested

**Operational: Yes****Lighting**

None  Unsecured

**Operational: Yes****Exhaust Fan**

Advise Installation  Dirty - Clean for best function  Noisy - Service/Repair/Replace

**Operational: Yes****Sink**

Worn  Chip/Scratch  Steel/Ceramic  Solid/Granite

**Faucet**

No Shut-off  Unsecured  Corrosion  Minor Leakage at Handle - Repair

**Operational: Yes****Trap/Drain**

Drain stop disconnected/inoperable  Slow Drain - Clean/Repair  Corrosion - Monitor for leaks

**Vanity**

Worn/Scratches  Missing/Loose Hardware  Prior Stains-No Leakage Now

**Counter**

Unsecured  Minor Damage - Scratches/Stains  Caulk at Backsplash

**Toilet**

No Shut-Off  Unsecured  Crooked - Monitor for leakage

**Operational: Yes**

Kitchen

**Floor**

Worn  Minor Cracking - Typica  Stains/Minor Damage

**Wall**

Uneven  Patched  Minor Cracking - Typica

**Ceiling**

Uneven  Patched- Typical  Minor Cracking - Typica

**Window**

Binds - Adjust/Repair  Not Tested  Thermal Pane  Single Pane  
 Treat Wood To Preserve/Protect  Representative # Inspected/Tested  Storm Window

**Operational**

**Lighting**

None  Unsecured  Representative # Inspected/Tested

**Operational**

**Sink**

Worn  Chip/Scratch

**Faucet**

No Shut-Off Valve  Unsecured  Corrosion  Minor Leakage at Handle - Repair

**Operational**

**Trap/Drain**

Slow Drain - Clean/Repair  Corrosion - Monitor for Leakage

**Counter**

Unsecured  Caulk at Backsplash  Minor Damage/Scratches/Worn

**Cabinet**

Worn/Scratches  Missing/Loose Hardware  Representative # Inspected/Tested

**Range Hood**

Cooktop Exhaust  No Exhaust  No Light  Noisy

**Operational**

**Exhaust vent**

Unsecured  Ductless  Concealed  To Exterior

**Filter**

Missing - Install for safety  Unsecured  Damaged  Greasy

**Major Appliances (Built-in)**

Tested ON/OFF only.  Did not Test All Functions/Cycles

All appliances were turned on using regular operating controls if they are connected or not shut down. All

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**Kitchen**

functions and different systems are not tested. The test simply comprises turning the appliances on to verify some basic functionality.

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**Dishwasher**

**Operational**

Brand GE

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**Stove/Cooktop**

**Operational**

Brand GE # SR232587Q

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**Refrigerator**

**Operational**

Brand GE# MR406846

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**Heat Source**

- None       Thermostat       Electric       Air Register       Radiant  
 Radiator/Convactor

**Interior Living Spaces**

**Floor**

- Worn                       Minor Cracking - Typica                       Staining/Minor Damage

**Wall**

- Uneven                       Patched - Typical                       Minor Cracking - Typica  
 Wood Frame w/drywall/plaster

Repair drywall behind front door. Considered a cosmetic condition.

**Ceiling**

- Uneven                       Patched - Typical                       Minor Cracking - Typica  
 Wood Frame w/drywall/plaster

**Window**

- Binds - Adjust/Repair                       Not Tested                       Fixed Pane                       Single Pane                      **Operational**  
 Treat Wood To Preserve/Protect                       Representative # Inspected/Tested                       Thermal Pane

*Windows are in good condition.*

**Lighting**

- None                       Unsecured                       Representative # Inspected/Tested

**Operational**

**Ceiling Fan**

- None                       Unsecured

**Operational**

**Interior Doors**

- Binds - Adjust/Repair                       Hinged                       Closet door off track  
 Floor guides missing                       Representative # Inspected/Tested

**Operational**

**Stairway**

- Carpet                       Wood                       Worn                       Squeaks - Typical

**Railing**

- Wood/Metal                       Incomplete                       None

**Exterior Doors**

- Binds - Adjust/Repair                       Weather Stripping Missing/Improper                       Dead Bolt  
 Minor Damage - Dent/Split/Worn                       Sliding                       Hinged

**Operational**

**Heat Source**

- Air Register                       Electric                       Radiator/Convactor                       None  
 Radiant-Concealed



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## Additional Comments

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### General Comments

This is a Prelisting Inspection performed for the seller of the home in preparation for putting the home on the market for sale. This inspection is completed to ASHI and OAHl standards, is visual in nature, and does not address building code compliance issues which are the purview of municipal building inspectors.

**Exterior**

**Exterior Walls**



Unsecured shingles

**Roof Structure**

**Main Roof**



Roof covering

**Roof Structure**

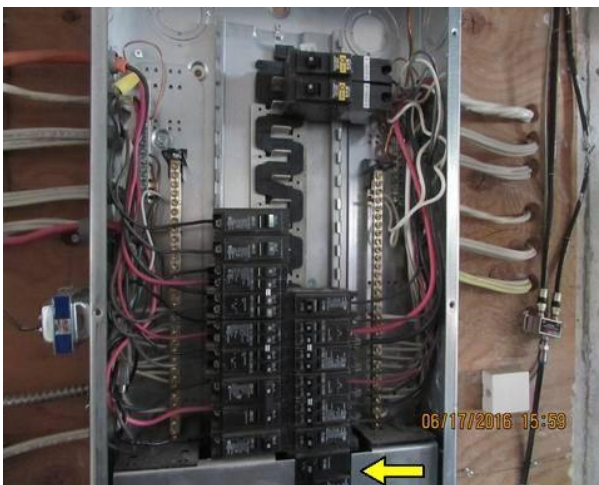
**Gutter/Downspout**



Downspout discharging against foundation

**Electrical Service**

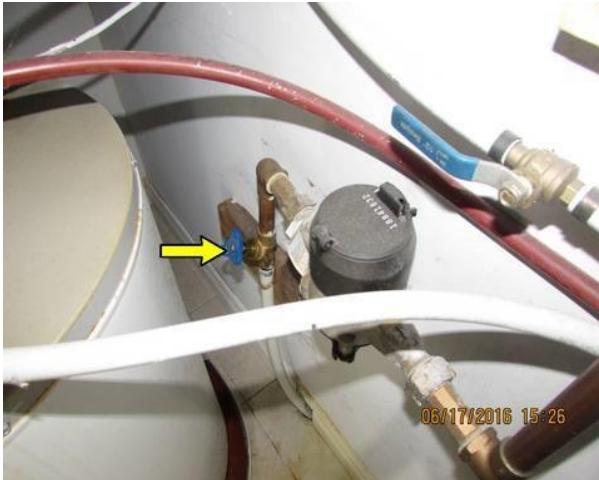
**Distribution Panel**



Electrical panel and main shut off

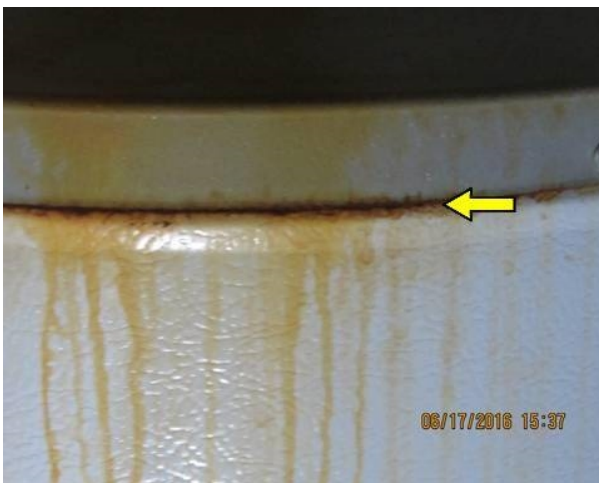
**Plumbing Components**

**Public Supply**



Water meter and main shutoff

**Hot Water Tank**



Staining and rusting



**All Baths**

**3rd floor**

**Tub/Enclosure**



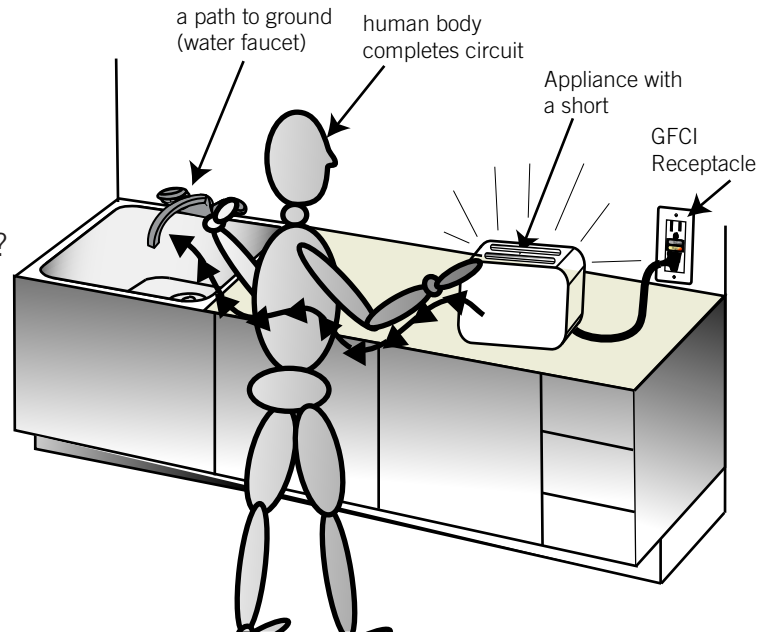
Deteriorating caulking at tub surround

# Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter

A ground fault circuit interrupter, or GFCI, is an inexpensive electrical safety device that can protect you and your family members from a serious electric shock.

Have you ever had an electric shock? While it is an unpleasant experience, it is not usually fatal. However, given the right conditions, the same shock could be fatal! If your body makes a solid connection to the ground, the shock could easily kill you. Here are two examples of a solid ground connection:

- If you are physically standing or touching the ground outside
- If you touch something conductive, such as any part of the plumbing system in your house, that is also touching the ground outside



In other words, if you decide to operate your hedge trimmer in your bare feet and you get a shock, you may not survive it.

## How Can a GFCI Help?

A GFCI is a special electrical outlet that prevents electric shocks in situations such as the ones described above. The GFCI monitors the electrical current leaving from and returning to the outlet. The current leaving the outlet should be the same amount as the returning current. If the current returning is less than that which leaves, the missing current could be passing through somebody's body to the ground. The GFCI detects the mismatch and shuts off the electrical outlet in a split second.

## Where Should GFCI Outlets Be Located?

GFCI outlets should be installed in any area that presents a risk of an electric shock with a direct path to the ground. In other words, anywhere you might directly touch the ground outside or anywhere where you might touch a part of the plumbing system. Some smart GFCIs locations are:

- Exterior outlets
- Kitchen counter outlets (not common in Canada)
- Bathroom outlets
- Garage outlets
- Outlets in unfinished basements

## Information Series

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This is not a complete list. Areas near swimming pools, hot tubs, and so on should also include this type of outlet.

GFCIs are not perfect, however, and have been known to “nuisance trip” when connected to certain types of electrical equipment. For this reason, exceptions to the suggested (or required) locations for GFCIs exist. For example, a regular outlet would be a better choice for a freezer in your garage since the potential for nuisance tripping of the GFCI is high and might go undetected for days, leading to spoiled food in the shut-off freezer.

## Remote GFCI

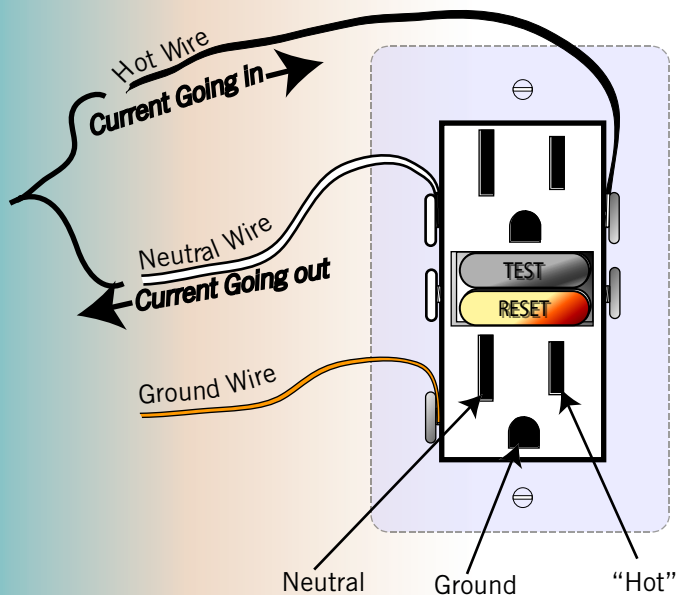
Several electrical outlets usually connect to a single circuit in an average home. A single GFCI outlet will protect all of the outlets in the circuit, even if the other outlets are not GFCIs. But the GFCI outlet must be the first outlet in the string in order for it to properly protect the other outlets, and, of course the connections have to be properly made.

Remote GFCIs sometimes cause confusion for home owners in the following ways:

- A home owner thinks the bathroom does not have a GFCI because the outlet looks like a standard one. The standard outlet under the protection of a remote GFCI should have a sticker indicating its GFCI protection. The problem is, the sticker does not stick forever. A Pillar To Post® inspector can test this for you.
- A standard outlet that does not appear to work in a bathroom or kitchen may actually be attached to a remote GFCI outlet that has nuisance tripped. Before calling an electrician, check the GFCI outlets in other bathrooms and in other locations around the house.

## Testing

GFCIs are easy to test and should be tested every month. Simply press the test button on the outlet. You should hear a pop as the reset button pops out a little. To reset, just press the reset button. If the GFCI fails to trip, or if you are unable to reset it, it is time for an electrician to replace it.



Special breakers also provide GFCI protection to the entire circuit. These breakers can be installed instead of GFCI outlets. The GFCI breaker should also be tested monthly. You will recognize this breaker from the test and reset button.

GFCIs can help prevent injury and death from electric shock. It is a small device worth having to ensure the safety of your family members.

Pillar To Post®, *the home of home inspection*

We welcome your comments and suggestions for future Information Series topics  
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# Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter

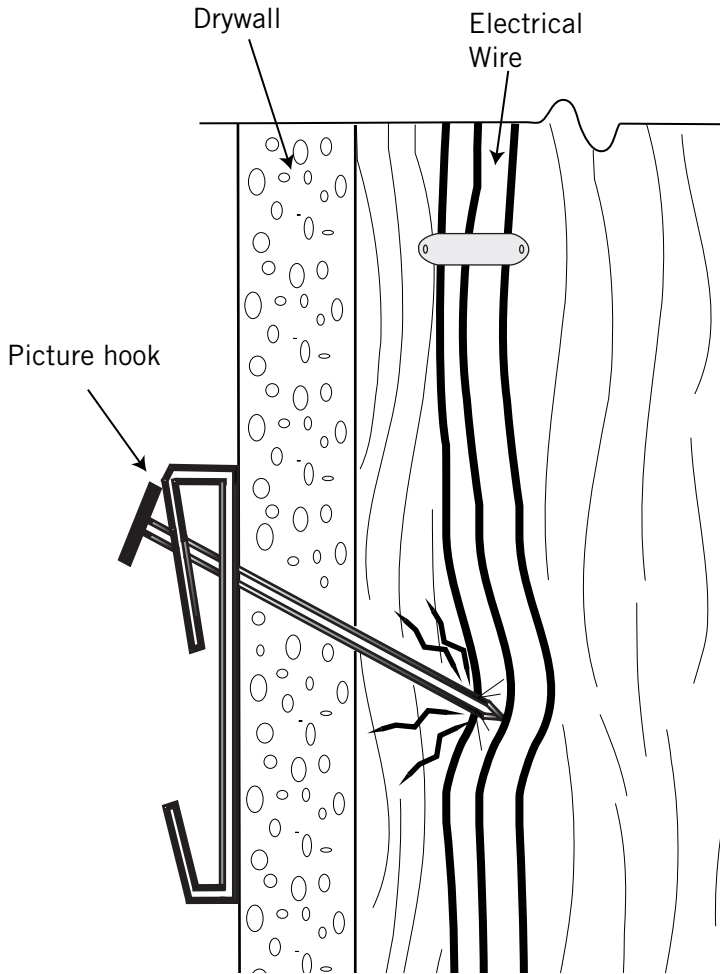
## Increasing Electrical Fire Safety

An “arc fault circuit interrupter,” or AFCI, is a new type of circuit breaker designed to detect sparking in an electrical system, and to shut down the affected circuit before it causes a fire. The jury is still out on whether AFCIs actually save lives and property.

A household circuit can cause fire in two ways: circuit overload and sparking. Standard circuit breakers or fuses usually protect an overloaded circuit, but the breakers may not trip from intermittent sparking. For example, if you pierce or sever an electrical cable while hammering a nail into a wall, you could create an intermittent short, resulting in sparking. If the breaker does not trip, a fire could start. The AFCI is designed to detect such problems.

Other potential causes of sparking:

- A frayed extension cord
- A squeezed or pinched cord
- Old and cracked insulation on electrical wires and cables
- Loose electrical connections



## What’s the Difference Between an AFCI and a GFCI?

A GFCI, or a “ground-fault circuit interrupter,” is typically installed in areas with a high risk for electrical shock, such as bathrooms (see Pillar To Post® GFCI Info Series). A GFCI protects people from electric shock, while an AFCI protects homes from electrical fires.

## What Do These Devices Look Like? Where Are They Installed?

An AFCI fits into the electrical panel in place of a standard circuit breaker. It looks like a GFCI breaker except the AFCI has a blue test button while the GFCI has an orange test button.

AFCIs are becoming mandatory in some jurisdictions. In 2002, the National Electrical Code insisted on AFCIs for all bedroom electrical outlets and their branch circuits.

Information Series

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AFCIs may be retrofitted to any home with a modern circuit breaker panel. But before you ask your electrician to replace all your breakers with AFCIs, consider the following:

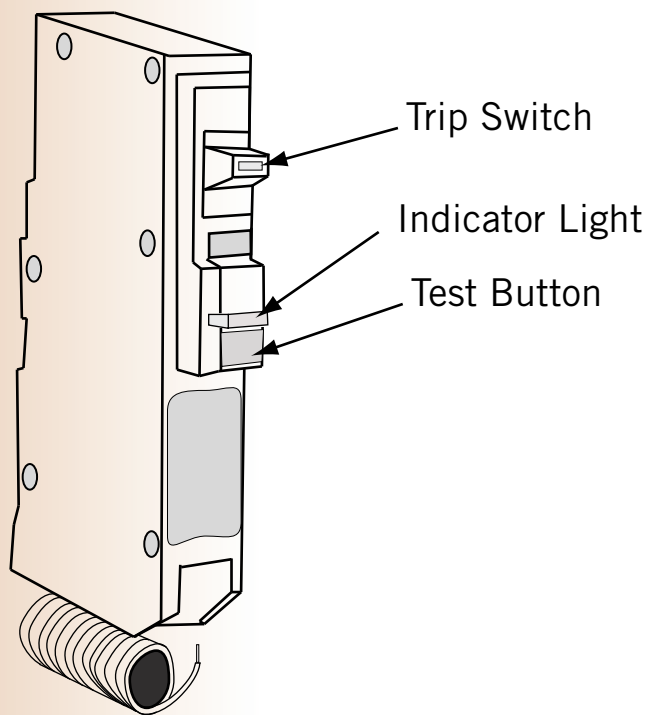
- AFCIs are expensive, about \$40 to \$60 dollars per breaker. For a typical panel, you might pay a sum of \$1,500, not including labor.
- AFCI breakers may not be available for an old panel.

### Can an AFCI Make an Old Electrical System Safer?

Old wiring has likely been subjected to years of modifications and abuse, making it a more likely candidate for sparking. Insurance companies are concerned about the safety of knob and tube wiring in particular, making an AFCI seem an ideal retrofit. But since AFCIs have not been tested with old wiring, certifying laboratories and electrical authorities cannot yet assure the public that AFCIs will perform as expected.

### Not Quite Electrical Nirvana

It will take several more years before statistics reflect anything concrete about how well AFCIs function. In the meantime, we can only assume that AFCIs reduce the chances of electrical spark-induced fires. Electrical authorities do plan, however, to ultimately mandate every breaker in your electrical panel as an AFCI or a GFCI, or a device that covers both, protecting people from electric shock and homes from electrical fires.



Pillar To Post® encourages anyone who feels they would benefit from AFCIs to consult an electrician. We would like to make one thing clear: we do not believe AFCIs are a quick fix for dangerous wiring, nor are they an excuse to live with an unsafe electrical system. A qualified electrician should promptly deal with unsafe wiring conditions.

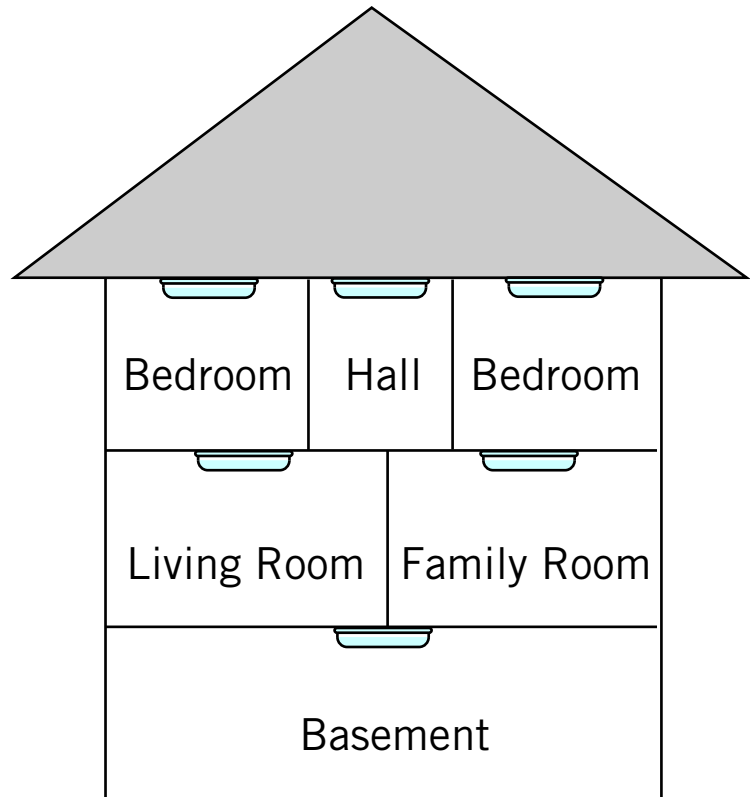
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# Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms are an incredible success story. Once the concept took hold in the 1970s, it wasn't long before the fire death rate was cut in half! Now, more than three decades later, most homes have at least one smoke alarm but we still have a problem – the smoke alarms aren't working! In one quarter of the homes with smoke alarms, the smoke alarms don't work. The cause is missing, dead or disconnected batteries (National Fire Protection Association). Pillar To Post® would like to encourage you to pay more attention to your smoke alarms.



The two key goals of smoke alarms are –

- To wake you up. You can't sense smoke and flame when you are asleep.
- Early warning. The sooner you know about a fire the better the possible outcome

## Placement of Smoke Alarms

While you should consult the instructions provided with the smoke alarm, here are some general guidelines. We do not address local bylaws and codes here.

- There should be at least one smoke alarm per floor including the basement.
- Smoke alarms should be placed outside every separate sleeping area. Many authorities suggest an alarm inside each bedroom as well.
- The alarm can be placed on the ceiling or high up on the wall. If the alarm is on the ceiling, it should be at least four inches away from any walls. If the alarm is on the wall, it should be at least four inches but not more than twelve inches from the ceiling.
- Peaked ceilings have stagnant air at the top. The smoke alarm should be three feet from the highest point.
- Do not place the smoke alarm where it could be affected by drafts such as next to a window or air vent.

## Maintaining

Test the smoke alarm once per month by pressing the test button until the alarm sounds then release the button. If the smoke alarm is battery operated, replace the battery every year. If you hear a chirping sound from the smoke alarm, change the batteries. Dust or vacuum the surface periodically. Replace the entire unit if it is older than 10 years or if you are not sure how old it is. Print the installation date inside the cover.

## False Alarms

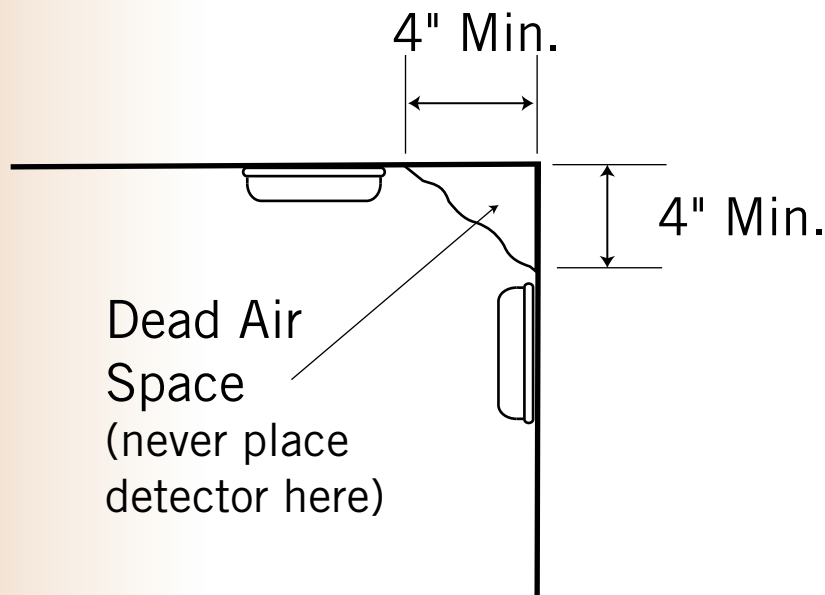
Nuisance tripping of your smoke alarm is bound to happen occasionally. Unfortunately, many people remove the battery to silence the alarm with the good intention of replacing it after the smoke clears. Here are some better ways to deal with nuisance tripping: Use an alarm with a 'hush button'. Move the smoke alarm a little further from the kitchen area. Try a different type of alarm. Some experts say that a photoelectric smoke alarm is a little less sensitive to common causes of false alarms.

## Hard Wired Alarms

Many homes today have smoke alarms wired right into the household electrical system. In addition, some homes have interconnected smoke alarms. This means if one alarm in the home sounds then the others sound as well.

## Escape Plan

Smoke and flame can spread quickly so you need to react quickly. It is vital that you and your family know what to do on hearing a smoke alarm. You should plan an escape route from every area of the home and identify a safe area to meet outside the home. You should rehearse the escape plan with your family. Walk through and identify obstacles that may slow you down such as windows that are jammed or exits that are crowded with storage etc.



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# Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide, or CO, a byproduct of incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, is a colorless, odorless gas. Breathing CO reduces the blood's ability to carry oxygen. In severe cases, CO can cause death.

Defective or malfunctioning fossil fuel appliances, or inappropriate use of appliances that burn fossil fuel close to or inside the home can pose a serious health hazard. Here are a few examples of dangerous operations:

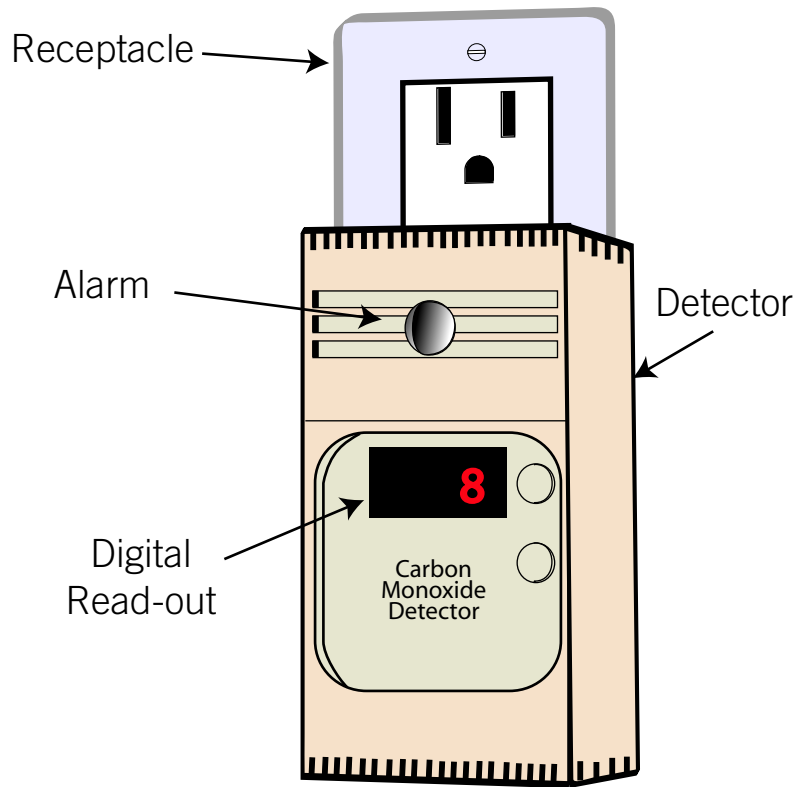
- Running an automobile or gas lawn mower inside the garage
- Operating a barbeque inside the home
- A gas or oil burning furnace with a blockage in the chimney
- Kerosene space heaters
- Operating a generator in the home during a power failure

## Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, weakness, chest pain, confusion, and loss of consciousness. Carbon monoxide poisoning can lead to death. Low level poisoning may go unnoticed because it may be mistaken for the flu.

## Carbon Monoxide Detector

You should have at least one carbon monoxide detector in your home. In some geographic areas, a CO detector is required by law. The CO detector should be placed where you can hear it if it goes off when you are asleep. A CO detector does not have to be placed on the ceiling, since unlike smoke, CO has approximately the same weight as air so it mixes





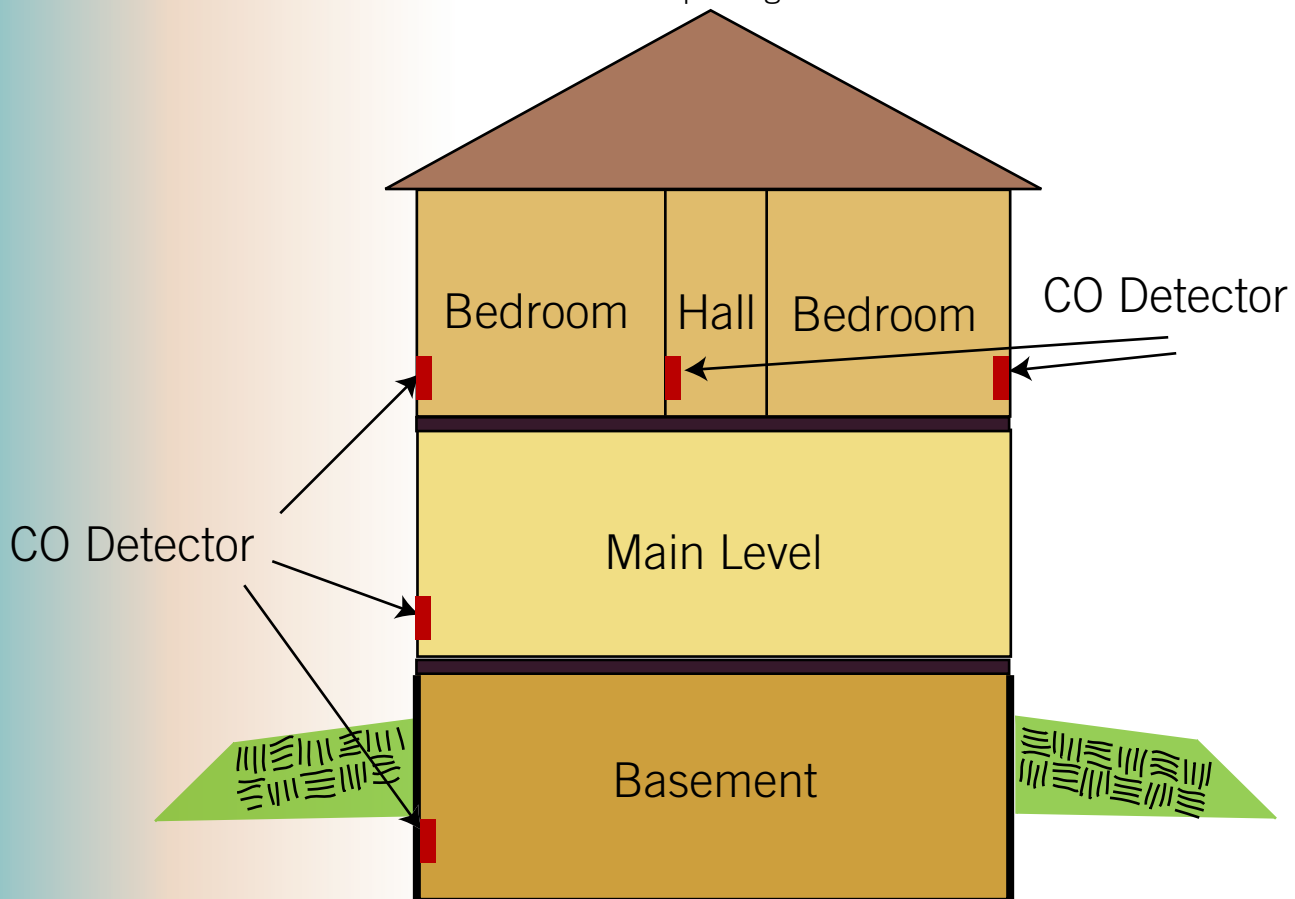
uniformly throughout the room rather than floating up to the ceiling. To avoid false alarms, do not install the detector next to heating and cooking appliances, vents, flues, or chimneys. Make sure you read and follow the operating, placement, and testing instructions that come with the detector.

If the carbon monoxide detector alarms, take it seriously.

### Avoiding CO Poisoning

- Have your heating systems serviced every year by a qualified technician.
- Have your fireplace chimney cleaned and inspected every year.
- Install at least one CO detector in your home and replace the batteries twice per year.
- Open the garage door prior to starting your car; drive the car out promptly. Do not leave it idling in the garage. Do not use a remote car starter when the car is in the garage.
- Do not use a charcoal or propane barbeque in the home.

If you are installing only one carbon monoxide (CO) detector, it should be located where you can hear it if it goes off when you are sleeping. For greater safety, multiple CO detectors can be installed throughout the home. Follow the instructions packaged with the detector.



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