



Flu Symptoms But No Sniffles? Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Is a Killer

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Most of us have heard of a tragic story of some poor soul giving it all up by ending their life in the garage. Close the door, start the car and wait for a precious few moments. For many of us, that is all the thinking we ever do about carbon monoxide poisoning – which can be fatal (*see SSP, "Silent and Odorless – A Killer", 4/25/07*). Of all the dangers that the mariner confronts, carbon monoxide poisoning is perhaps the most dangerous since it is odorless, colorless and tasteless. Unarmed, you will never see it coming. Given its dangers, please read on.

What Creates Carbon Monoxide?

Burning hydrocarbons, plain and simple. Diesel, gasoline, propane – all are hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide (CO) is a natural by-product of burning them. You cannot tune your engine not to create CO. You can create CO-safe environments around and in your boat but you cannot defy the laws of chemistry.

Your engine doesn't even have to be the one that is on. Your neighbor at the dock has his generator on to power the A/C and TV – and his exhaust is wafting into your cabin.

Also, it could be your engine but you think that you are immune because you haven't enclosed your cockpit. You have only enclosed the windshield and side panel areas, leaving the aft wide open... well, called the "station wagon effect", an area that is enclosed on 3 sides creates a vacuum behind it as it pushes ahead – and it is sucking CO into the "cup" it has created.

You are in that cup...

Even more tragic are the circumstances where (young?) boaters engage in "teak surfing"

And the smell of it isn't what is killing you. What you smell is unburned hydrocarbons. What you can't smell is CO...

What is it and how do you know you are succumbing to it?

Carbon monoxide (CO) kills you by attaching itself to your blood cells in a way that keeps your blood from picking up fresh oxygen as it passes through your lungs. You essentially suffocate slowly while surrounded by air. Little by little, the CO hitches a ride on your blood cells until there are no seats left on the life-sustaining bus (your blood) for the oxygen to sit. As it happens, you start to get headaches, muscle aches, excessive fatigue and nausea. As I tell my seamanship students, "If you are starting to feel like you are coming down with the flu, but you don't have the sniffles, get out of there! You may be dying of CO poisoning!"

What do you do now?

Say you enter your cruiser, and you find a crew man lying unconscious on the sole of the cabin. The manual actually says that you are first to try to isolate the source of the fumes, extinguish them and proceed to get your mate to fresh air (to start the cleansing cycle of kicking the CO's out of their seats and replacing them with O's!)

Here is where I am coming from. This strategy could cause two people to die from CO poisoning, not one. IF you know that the only source of CO poisoning is YOUR engine, and you can kill it in a virtual flash, do it – or get out of there immediately and run for help! If you have to play Sherlock Holmes looking for clues, you are playing with your life. Remember, it could be your slip-mate's engine that is polluting your air. Also, the cabin has

built up some degree of CO concentration. It may be a deadly amount and you don't have a chemistry kit in your pocket. You are gambling with your life.

You certainly can [1] grab a lungful of fresh air from outside, hold your breath and [2] try to drag the person out of the cabin. If you can't, [3] drop them and run for help. If you can get them out, but they are not breathing, give them artificial respiration (sometimes called CPR) and scream for help between breaths!

How to prevent it?

One, create fresh air paths that keep the station wagon effect from overtaking you from behind. Don't form that cup – crack a window somewhere and create a jet-stream through your boat. Just be aware that running on a "slow bell*" may still create an opportunity for CO to build up in your cockpit. Two, put carbon monoxide detectors in ALL enclosed spaces, especially sleeping quarters. These devices can be battery-operated and are readily available. \$29.95 at places like Home Depot, Wal-Mart, the internet, etc... There are models that can be tied directly into your battery system like a bilge pump – never fails unless the battery itself is dead.

I've heard these devices. They can wake the dead. Almost. Be aware. Be safe. Always prepared – semper paratus...!

* *slow bell is putting just enough way on to maintain bare steerage. Back drafting can occur under such conditions – and you'll never smell it.*

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux2010@aol.com or go direct to John Blevins, who is in charge of new members matters, at FSO-PS@emcg.us and we will help you "get in this thing..."



by TONY SALERNO

FISHING WITH TONY

INCREASE IN FLUKE QUOTA PROVES FISHERMEN ARE RIGHT

When Congress reauthorized the Magnuson Stevens Act in 2006, key lawmakers from New Jersey and New York successfully fought to include a provision to extend the rebuilding timeframe for summer flounder by an additional three years. Through this legislative effort in the House, key language within the newly authorized federal fisheries law allowed the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to extend the end of the time period for reaching the summer flounder biomass target until 2013, which helped the Mid-Atlantic States avoid a dramatically low quota that could have resulted in a virtual shutdown of the entire fishery.

"Instead of letting our summer flounder fishery collapse and have coastal fishermen suffer through a moratorium on fluke fishing, several key legislators in the Northeast were able keep our rebuilding periods going for a few years," said Jim Donofrio, Executive Director of the Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA). "Without this deadline extension, we would've had no fishery whatsoever at this point in the process, I'm sure of that," he said.

Last week, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) voted to increase the total allowable catch of summer flounder for 2011 to 33.95 million pounds. By subtracting by-catch mortality numbers from within both the commercial and recreational sector, the total allowable landings of 29.48 million pounds for the 2011-fishing year for summer flounder, welcome news for the coastal fishing community.

Apparently, it's not lost on the folks at Pew Environment Group either, which issued a release this week, praising the MAFMC for helping rebuild summer flounder populations.

"Twenty years ago, the Mid-Atlantic summer flounder population dropped to less than 15 percent of sustainable levels, due to over fishing," said Lee Crockett, director of federal fisheries policy for The Pew Environment Group. "Thanks to a strengthened rebuilding plan, this fish has bounced back and is almost fully restored to healthy levels." According to the Pew release, a National Marine Fisheries Service assessment indicated that the rebuilding plan is working and the summer flounder population has reached 89 percent of healthy levels.

In his recent statement, Crockett referenced a 2009 Pew-financed paper which found that rebuilt fish populations in the Mid-Atlantic would generate an additional \$570 million per year in direct economic benefits, while adding "amending federal law to weaken or delay rebuilding depleted fish populations would deny coastal communities these important benefits."

Summer flounder is a vital resource to coastal mid-Atlantic communities and we need to continue to work toward fair management of the species. I believe we need to go further in creating flexibility in quota management to ensure we continue successful rebuilding and avoid overly burdensome regulation."

SUFFOLK COUNTY PARKS OFFERS SPORTFISHING INSTRUCTION

Ten-Week Course Covers Techniques, Tackle Selection, Hot Fishing Spots and More

The Suffolk County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation will offer a ten-week instructional course, "Sport Fishing on Long Island", this fall. Captain Jerry McGrath, a former Montauk charter skipper, avid fisherman and experienced, acclaimed instructor will give first-hand instruction and tips for planning a rewarding day of fishing.

"Participants will learn numerous techniques to sharpen and improve skills for catching a variety of fish found in local Long Island waters," said County Executive Steve Levy. These species include striped bass, fluke, flounder, weakfish, blackfish, blues, tuna, shark and more.

Captain McGrath has designed the classes to educate novices as well as the more advanced anglers in all areas of fish finding, bait and lure selection, chumming, fishing locales and "hot spots", anchoring, tackle selection, knot and rig tying, and safety. Students will be treated to the extensive use of audio-visual materials including Power Point slide presentations, videotapes, and detailed computerized handouts. Guest speakers, many of whom are experienced and expert charter captains themselves, will address the class participants on dates to be announced. Optional fishing field trips will also be offered at an additional cost.

Classes will be held on Monday nights from 7:30 – 9:30 pm (beginning October 18, 2010) in the Media Room of the H. Lee Dennison Building in Hauppauge. Flexible make-up classes are also possible for those people who have conflicting schedules. The regular course fee is \$130.00 per person, with discounts available for children who are 17 or younger and accompanied by a paid adult registrant (\$85.00), and senior citizens 65 and older (\$105.00). For more information or to obtain a registration form, please contact the Suffolk County Parks Department at (631) 854-4947.

