# London sees sharp rise in carbon monoxide call-outs amid rising energy costs



The London Fire Brigade (LFB) has reported a concerning rise in the number of call-outs related to carbon monoxide (CO) incidents, with figures more than doubling over the past five years. Between August 2024 and July 2025, the brigade responded to 1,714 emergency calls related to carbon monoxide, a gas often described as a "silent killer" due to its undetectable nature by taste, sight, or smell. This escalation reflects a broader trend seen in recent years, with a total of 7,764 incidents recorded over the past six years.

Assistant Commissioner Pamela Oparaocha emphasised the risks associated with alternative heating methods, cautioning against practices such as burning treated wood, which can release toxic fumes and potentially ignite nearby materials. She linked the rise in CO incidents to the increasing cost of living, suggesting that some households might be resorting to unsafe heating methods or delaying necessary appliance servicing to save money. "As we enter some of the coldest months of the year, it's natural to want to heat homes in a cost-effective way, but keeping warm must be done in a safe way," she said.

Recent incidents highlight the dangers of carbon monoxide exposure. Last week, the LFB dealt with elevated CO levels detected at a food court on Kensington High Street, leading to evacuation and ventilation before the building was declared safe. In March 2023, a significant carbon monoxide leak in a City of London flat required evacuation of residents, with safety precautions extended to nearby occupants. Similarly, in January 2023, dangerously high CO levels were recorded in Southgate due to an open fire, illustrating the hazards linked to alternative heating methods during periods of rising energy costs.

The brigade has also noted a rise in heating-related fires, responding to 36 such fires between late December 2024 and January 2025 alone—an average of one per day. In total, 236 heating-related fires were recorded in 2024, resulting in six injuries. The LFB urges residents to register heating appliances and maintain them rigorously to prevent such incidents.

Historically, the rise in carbon monoxide incidents is not new. Between 2009 and 2017, the number of CO-related emergencies in London increased from 207 to 569, accompanied by 24 deaths and 430 injuries. These figures underpin the longstanding call from the LFB for the installation of carbon monoxide detectors in all rooms containing fuel-burning appliances, with frequent testing to ensure they remain functional.

In light of these ongoing risks, the brigade continues to advocate for public awareness and safety measures, suggesting that residents install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms, particularly in rooms with fuel-burning devices. Financial support and advice on safe heating are available through local authorities and organisations such as Citizens Advice to help households manage energy costs without compromising safety.

The London Fire Brigade's warnings come at a time when heating and energy security remain pressing concerns for many Londoners, especially with fluctuating energy prices and colder weather. Their consistent message is clear: while staying warm is essential, it must never come at the expense of safety.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.aol.com/articles/crews-respond-surge-carbon-monoxide-070759500.html), [[4]](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2018-news/carbon-monoxide-incidents-more-than-double-in-the-capital/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.aol.com/articles/crews-respond-surge-carbon-monoxide-070759500.html), [[4]](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2018-news/carbon-monoxide-incidents-more-than-double-in-the-capital/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.aol.com/articles/crews-respond-surge-carbon-monoxide-070759500.html), [[5]](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/incidents/2023/march/carbon-monoxide-leak-city-of-london/), [[3]](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2023/january/southgate-carbon-monoxide-alert-on-open-fires-prompts-warning-from-the-brigade-as-energy-bills-rise/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2025-news/january/london-fire-brigade-attends-heating-fires-daily-over-past-month/), [[6]](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2025-news/january/london-fire-brigade-attends-heating-fires-daily-over-past-month/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2018-news/carbon-monoxide-incidents-more-than-double-in-the-capital/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.aol.com/articles/crews-respond-surge-carbon-monoxide-070759500.html), [[7]](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2023/january/southgate-carbon-monoxide-alert-on-open-fires-prompts-warning-from-the-brigade-as-energy-bills-rise/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.aol.com/articles/crews-respond-surge-carbon-monoxide-070759500.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2025-news/january/london-fire-brigade-attends-heating-fires-daily-over-past-month/> - Between 22 December 2024 and 23 January 2025, the London Fire Brigade responded to 36 heating-related fires, averaging one per day. This brought the total for 2024 to 236 such incidents, resulting in six injuries. The Brigade urges the public to register heating appliances and use them safely, especially during colder months when alternative heating methods are more common. ([london-fire.gov.uk](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2025-news/january/london-fire-brigade-attends-heating-fires-daily-over-past-month/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2023/january/southgate-carbon-monoxide-alert-on-open-fires-prompts-warning-from-the-brigade-as-energy-bills-rise/> - In January 2023, the London Fire Brigade responded to a carbon monoxide alert in Southgate, London, where dangerously high levels were detected due to an open fire. The incident highlighted the risks associated with alternative heating methods during rising energy costs. The Brigade advises residents to ensure chimneys and flues are regularly maintained and to use carbon monoxide alarms in homes. ([london-fire.gov.uk](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2023/january/southgate-carbon-monoxide-alert-on-open-fires-prompts-warning-from-the-brigade-as-energy-bills-rise/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2018-news/carbon-monoxide-incidents-more-than-double-in-the-capital/> - Between 2009 and 2017, carbon monoxide-related incidents in London more than doubled, from 207 to 569. The London Fire Brigade recorded 24 deaths and 430 injuries during this period. The Brigade urges residents to install carbon monoxide alarms in rooms with fuel-burning appliances and to test them regularly. ([london-fire.gov.uk](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2018-news/carbon-monoxide-incidents-more-than-double-in-the-capital/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/incidents/2023/march/carbon-monoxide-leak-city-of-london/> - In March 2023, the London Fire Brigade attended a carbon monoxide leak on Middlesex Street in the City of London. Firefighters evacuated three people from a flat and advised 50 to 100 others to stand outside as a precaution. The incident underscored the importance of fitting carbon monoxide alarms in all rooms containing fuel-burning appliances. ([london-fire.gov.uk](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/incidents/2023/march/carbon-monoxide-leak-city-of-london/?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2025-news/january/london-fire-brigade-attends-heating-fires-daily-over-past-month/> - Between 22 December 2024 and 23 January 2025, the London Fire Brigade responded to 36 heating-related fires, averaging one per day. This brought the total for 2024 to 236 such incidents, resulting in six injuries. The Brigade urges the public to register heating appliances and use them safely, especially during colder months when alternative heating methods are more common. ([london-fire.gov.uk](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2025-news/january/london-fire-brigade-attends-heating-fires-daily-over-past-month/?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2023/january/southgate-carbon-monoxide-alert-on-open-fires-prompts-warning-from-the-brigade-as-energy-bills-rise/> - In January 2023, the London Fire Brigade responded to a carbon monoxide alert in Southgate, London, where dangerously high levels were detected due to an open fire. The incident highlighted the risks associated with alternative heating methods during rising energy costs. The Brigade advises residents to ensure chimneys and flues are regularly maintained and to use carbon monoxide alarms in homes. ([london-fire.gov.uk](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2023/january/southgate-carbon-monoxide-alert-on-open-fires-prompts-warning-from-the-brigade-as-energy-bills-rise/?utm_source=openai))