

# **Carbon Monoxide in Vacation / Short Term Rentals**

Eric Thibodeaux, MPH, CSP

R.E.M. Risk Consultants

Safer VRs

# Potential Carbon Monoxide Exposures in Vacation / Short Term Rentals

- Short term rental industry has a low barrier to entry and owners and property managers are not properly managing safety
- Property Management Companies are beginning to understand safety and loss prevention potential hazards and controls
- Safety is no longer about the absence of events; safety is the presence of controls (Conklin, 2019).

# Carbon Monoxide Controls

- 18 US States have requirements for CO alarms in short-term rentals
- 32 US States do not have requirements for CO alarms in short-term rentals
- Carbon monoxide alarms are the best control
- Dual Smoke & CO alarms confuse guests, who don't respond appropriately
- Maintenance of fuel fired sources in the home
- Maintenance of pool heaters
- Vent combustion gases out of the property
- Keep grills or fire pits at least 10 feet and 25 feet, respectively from the home

# Data Collection for CO Exposure in Short Term Rental Industry

- No data collection for safety events in the short-term rental industry
- The data collected from National Fire Incident Reporting Systems (NFIRS) does not have a method to identify a property as an owner-occupied, long-term rental, or short-term rental
- Data collection for all events, including CO exposures in short-term rental is an area I am working to improve

# What Actions are Needed?

- Educate property managers and owners about the potential hazards and impact of carbon monoxide on guests and owners
- Implement and monitor controls to eliminate or reduce the likelihood of carbon monoxide exposure
- Implement an event reporting tool to capture safety and loss prevention events, including CO exposure, for the short-term rental industry
- Use this data to persuade the 32 states without CO alarm regulations to enact legislation to require CO alarms as a control