

Firing Your Stove

Some ash left over from the last fire can be desirable, since it acts as a heat reflector in the bottom of the stove.

Crumple a small amount of paper of paper and place it in the fire chamber. Over the paper place kindling wood and a few pieces of small fuel wood. Be sure the damper is open, then light the paper. Once the wood begins to burn well and a good draft has been created, larger pieces of wood may be added.

NEVER

Use flammable liquids to light a fire

Store flammable liquids in an area where the stove is being used

Burn trash, large amounts of paper or small twigs

"Over Fire" so that stove pipe becomes "Red Hot"

Leave the doors open or screen off except to fuel the fire.

Dry clothing closer than three feet to the stove

Leave small children in a room where a wood stove is in use

Chimney Fires

A chimney fire can be a frightening and dangerous experience. A chimney fire may produce loud crackling, rumbling or roaring noises and a red hot stove pipe. These fires can spread to the building itself, causing serious loss and endangering the lives of you family.

Chimney fires are caused when **CREOSOTE**, a normal by-product of burning wood, collects on the inside of the chimney and is ignited. The causes of creosote buildup are listed below:

Flue temperature below 250 degrees allow creosote to condense

Slow burning, smoldering fires cause creosote buildup

Burning unseasoned soft wood causes creosote accumulation

Reduce Creosote Buildup

These steps will help limit creosote buildup:

Burn only dry, seasoned wood

Avoid slow burning smoky fires

Have your chimney inspected and if necessary, cleaned periodically

If you do have a chimney fire, in spite of your precautions, do these things:

Call the fire department and get everyone out of the house

Close the stove door, draft opening and damper to cut off air to the fire.

Never throw water on a hot stove

A chimney fire may damage parts of the chimney or stove pipe. Be sure to have an inspection made of your entire system before you use it.

Chimney Cleaning

Chimney cleaning is a fact of life for the wood burner. If you burn wood, the formation of some creosote is unavoidable. Your chimney should be cleaned when creosote at any time reaches 1/4 inch. The only way to tell when this point is reached is to inspect your chimney. How often you should conduct an inspection varies according to many factors. To begin, make your inspections fairly often. After a time, experience will tell you how often your flue needs to be inspected and cleaned. If you want to become your own chimney sweep, start with the correct tools. Makeshift equipment may damage your chimney. For those who are not inclined to perform the inspection and cleaning chore themselves, professional chimney sweeps are available in most areas. Next to proper installation, proper cleaning is the most important wood stove fire safety rule.

Ashes

Dispose of ashes carefully. Place them in a metal container only on a noncombustible surface.

Added Precautions

For the greatest measure of safety for yourself and your family, you should install one or more approved smoke detectors. Each family should also practice a fire escape plan with two ways out of every room in the house.

The use of wood burning stoves brings into the home certain dangers associated with the use of wood fuel. These dangers can result in serious problems for the unsuspecting home owner. Remember that the use of wood fuel requires constant attention to safety practices.

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