

FIRE SAFETY FOR A CLEAN BURNING FIRE.



- Chimneys should be inspected and cleaned annually by a certified chimney specialist.
- Gasoline or other flammable liquids should never be used to start a wood fire. It could explode or flare up.

- Pressure treated wood should not be burned in stoves or fireplaces because it contains toxic chemicals that can make you sick.
- Artificial logs made of wax and sawdust should never be used in wood stoves and should only be used one at a time in fireplaces.
- Learn about seasoned woods and which type of woods are best to burn. Only hardwoods should be used as fuel since softwoods have a high content of creosote and resin.

Remember, hardwood trees have leaves and softwood trees have needles.



ONE FINAL THOUGHT...

Ask your fire department or stove and fireplace accessory store about special chimney fire extinguishers; keep one handy for every fireplace or stove. A standard ABC extinguisher should also be on hand. But keep in mind that if you have any doubt on whether or not to fight a fire—Don't! Get out and call the fire department.

**REMEMBER:
BIG FIRES START SMALL!**

THAT COZY FIRE IN YOUR FIREPLACE CAN SPELL DISASTER IF PROPER PRECAUTIONS ARE NOT TAKEN.

DON'T LET YOUR DREAMS GO UP IN SMOKE!

FREDERICK COUNTY
VOLUNTEER FIRE & RESCUE ASSOCIATION

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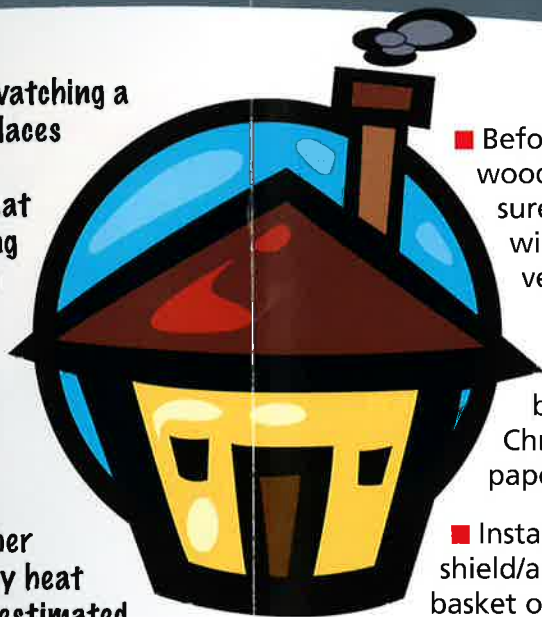


CHIMNEY, FIREPLACE, AND WOODSTOVE FIRE SAFETY TIPS

KEEP CHIMNEYS, FIREPLACES AND WOODSTOVES CLEAN TO ENJOY SAFE, COZY FIRES!

Many dreams are made while watching a roaring fire on a cold day. Fireplaces and wood burning stoves can provide you with economical heat and a relaxed atmosphere during those cold days. However, when those popular heating devices are not properly maintained, they can be a source of danger and possible disaster resulting in a chimney fire. More than one-third of Americans use fireplaces, woodstoves, and other fuel-fired appliances as primary heat sources in their home, yet it is estimated that less than 20% of American homeowners realize the importance of regular chimney maintenance.

To understand what causes a chimney fire, you must realize that when wood is burned, it gives off creosote, tars, and resins. These products of incomplete combustion collect in the flue liner and if allowed to build up, they will eventually ignite. Creosote ignites at 451°F (about the same burning point as paper) and can quickly become a raging 2100°F inferno. In fact, heating fires account for 36% of residential home fires in rural areas every year. Don't let your dreams go up in smoke, follow these important fire safety tips!



- Before starting a fire in your woodstove or fireplace, be sure the draft is open wide. This allows proper ventilation for your fire.
- Your fireplaces should never be used for burning garbage, Christmas trees, piles of paper, or building scraps.

■ Install a spark shield/arrestor or wire basket on top of your chimney. The chimney should rise at least two feet higher than the roof peak or any tall, nearby objects. (Add another foot if your roof is flat or nearly flat.)



- Check your flue regularly for any obstructions such as squirrel or bird nests, debris, etc.
- Don't pile on the wood and smother the fire because that causes creosote to build up in your stove and chimney. Remember, high flames burning hot will burn cleanly!



- Woodstoves should be at least 36" from unprotected combustible materials.
- Always use a fireplace screen or glass doors. Never keep your wood burning stove door open unless you have a screen or glass door as a back-up.
- Keep the area around the hearth clear of debris, decorations, and flammable materials.
- Keep your fireplace and chimney in good condition. Check your chimney for cracks and loose mortar or bricks. Have any problems fixed before using your fireplace or stove.
- Never leave a fire in your fireplace unattended. Make sure the fire is extinguished before going to bed.

