



NEWSLETTER



CHIMNEYS AND FIREPLACES

This time of year, people who own fireplaces are probably using and enjoying them. Especially when it's really cold like it has been recently. Here are some basic suggestions regarding fireplaces:

- Get your chimney cleaned and inspected! When I was about five years old, we had a chimney fire. It sounded like a freight train coming through, pretty scary. Flammable creosote builds up over the years and catches on fire. It spreads quickly and the entire interior of the chimney catches fire. A huge air draft develops and makes a horrible noise as it rushes into and through the chimney. Chimney fires are common and occasionally, they turn into house fires. If you get your chimney cleaned, you probably won't get a chimney fire.
- There should be no combustible material within at least 6 inches of the fireplace opening. Since most fireplace surrounds are made of wood, the 6-inch clearance rule becomes important. There are also requirements for non-combustible materials in front of the fireplace.



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- There should be a flue damper which has to be open before you start your fire. Otherwise, the room will be filled with smoke very quickly. So, make sure it's open before you start the fire. The next morning when the fireplace is cool you can shut the damper to prevent heated air from escaping into the atmosphere through your chimney.

Please be aware that there are several building code nuances pertaining to fireplace and chimney installations. In addition, different codes may come into play based on your location. Consider researching the subject of fireplace installations in your municipality and make sure that your fireplace, fireplace surround, the area in front of your fireplace, as well as your chimney, are properly set up. We also suggest that you get your fireplace and chimney inspected and serviced by a knowledgeable fireplace/chimney contractor. It may just prevent a fire!



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