



# Woodburning Stove Safety Tips

## Guide to Woodburners

Woodburners have become the largest source of heating related fires in U.S. homes today. Some major causes of woodburning related fires are:

1. Excessive creosote buildup in the chimney. Creosote is a black substance that resembles a tarlike liquid or small black flakes. Creosote burns easily.
2. Inadequate clearances from the unit to combustibles, such as walls, ceilings, floors and furniture.
3. An improperly installed or poorly maintained chimney.
4. Improper installation and maintenance of the appliance.

### Placement of the Woodburner

Proper placement of the woodburner is critical. All woodburners must be installed to comply with local fire/building codes and manufacturer's specifications.

Woodburners must be placed away from combustibles to reduce the chance of a fire.

### Chimneys

The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that about 45,000 chimney fires occur each year. These fires are often a result of poor maintenance and inadequate cleaning of the chimney.

All chimneys require special care so smoke and flue gases are properly vented. Have your chimney inspected and cleaned before each heating season. Masonry chimneys should have a flue liner to help reduce the possibility of the masonry absorbing the creosote. If your flue liner is damaged or cracked, this could increase the chance of a chimney fire.

### Multiple Venting

Only one woodburner or heater should be vented into a single flue. If a woodburner is connected to a flue already used by another heater, serious problems may arise.

### Conclusion

Woodburning units must be used carefully. Some basic precautions you should follow when using your unit include:

1. Read the instruction manual that came with your woodburner. If you do not have one, call the manufacturer for a copy.
2. Never use any type of flammable or combustible liquid to start a fire. This includes gasoline, kerosene, lighter fluid and other flammable liquids.
3. Do not burn plastics, garbage, wood that has been treated with a preservative, paint or other chemical.
4. Children should be taught not to touch or play around the stove.
5. Burn wood in your unit according to manufacturer's recommendations.
6. When cleaning ashes out of the unit, put them in a metal container that has a metal lid. Place the container on a concrete floor or other non-combustible surface, away from other combustible materials outside your home. Do not place the ashes in a paper sack or cardboard box; there may still be a hot ember that could ignite the container. Embers may stay hot for several days.