



## Wood Burning Appliances

A wood burning appliance not only adds warmth, and ambiance, but this renewable source of heat can be a clean, and efficient method of providing heat. The newer appliances are safer, and burn wood more efficiently.

The following are just a few highlights pertaining to the installation and maintenance of wood burning appliances - wood stoves, fireplace inserts, and both the conventional and the newer Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rated. All certified stoves will display at least one of following testing agencies labels- Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (ULC), Canadian Standards Association (CSA), and/or Intertek Testing Services Ltd. (ITS) - formerly Warnock Hersey.

All appliances, flue pipes, and chimneys must be installed as outlined in the manufacturer's installation guide. Also, always check with your local Building Department, to determine if a building permit is required.

You must disclose the use of any wood-burning appliance to your insurance company. They may request an inspection of the certified appliance to ensure it is in compliance with existing rules and is safe to use.

Important factors to be considered with wood burning appliances are sizing, location, and chimney location. Other factors are your living requirements - is it the main source of heat, or to augment an existing system? It is very important to realize that adding a wood burning appliance to an existing building will change the dynamics of the air flow between the outside and inside of the dwelling. Consult a qualified person in the building industry to evaluate the impact of introducing a wood burning appliance to an existing dwelling.

One of the by-products of wood burning is creosote. Creosote build up is a result of poor firing techniques, lack of maintenance and unseasoned firewood. Creosote is a black tarry substance and is very flammable and causes chimney fires. A chimney should be cleaned at least once a year, or more often, depending on the type and amount of wood being burned, frequency of use, and type of appliance being used.

Wood should be seasoned to avoid the effects of creosote. A minimum of one year drying time is always a good rule to follow. Hardwoods burn cleaner and generate the most heat.

Safety must be first considered, with all aspects of Wood Burning appliances. Always consult with your Wood Energy Technology Transfer (WETT) certified technician, for installation of any wood burning appliance, (*Technician*) the cleaning and inspection of your chimney, (*Chimney Sweep*) and inspection of an existing appliance, (*Basic Inspection*). Always remember, a carbon monoxide detector should be installed in the same room as the wood-burning appliance, and smoke detectors are required by law to be installed on each level of the dwelling.

For more information on the above, the following can be used as references:

- WETT (Wood Energy Technology Transfer) web site: [www.wettinc.ca](http://www.wettinc.ca)
- "A Guide to Residential Wood Heating"- National Resources Canada - 1-800-387-2000

*Courtesy of Bill Dickie  
BCS Home Inspection Services Inc.,  
WETT Certified - Basic Inspection  
1-866-545-6077*