

# SAFETY

## Overview

To gain maximum enjoyment and benefit from your stove, you must have a safe installation. Adhere to all guidelines found in this manual. All local and national building codes need to be followed. Having a certified installer perform all connections to an inspected chimney system is strongly advised. If you choose to perform any or all of this work yourself, it must be inspected by either a Certified Wood Stove Specialist or a Certified Chimney Specialist.

You will often find the local Fire Department to be very knowledgeable. They may inspect your house for proper warning devices, fire extinguishers, and evacuation routes. Keep their phone number handy. Although many communities utilize Fire Department personnel for woodstove installation inspections, they are not usually trained as combustion venting specialists. Generally, you are best advised to use a certified specialist. The sense of security that comes with a properly installed and maintained system is worth far more than its cost.

## Installation

Your Woodstock Soapstone Co. Stove has been thoroughly tested and listed to UL #1482 by an independent testing laboratory. UL #1482 is the standard for testing solid fuel appliances and is universally recognized by all national building regulatory agencies, (SBCC, BOCA, ICBO) and individual states. Your woodstove is a safe product, but it must be installed in accordance with the instructions in this manual. Woodstoves themselves rarely cause fires, but improper installation or careless operation are often to blame.

Follow the guidelines in the Installation chapter of this manual with regard to:

- Proper chimney and connector pipe
- Clearances to combustible surfaces and objects
- Floor protection

## Smoke and the Chimney

According to [www.woodheat.org](http://www.woodheat.org), "The chimney is the engine that drives a wood heat system". To have a safe system you must have:

- The correct type of chimney
- The correct size of chimney
- Correct location inside the house
- A properly installed system

Smoke spilling into the living space when starting a fire is an inconvenience. Smoke spilling into the house when you are away or asleep can be a major problem. In order to have all the smoke go up the chimney all the time, the chimney must have positive draft. Ideally, this draft is between 10-18 pascals, or .04-.07 inches water column, a pressure measurement, when there is no fire in the stove. A certified installer can perform a simple draft test for this.

## Hot Surfaces

Your stove is HOT to the touch! Utilizing the fall-away tool and use of heat resistant or insulated stove gloves can prevent serious burns when opening or closing the door, ash pan, or lid of your stove.

## Ash removal

Convenient and safe ash removal is a necessity for trouble free wood burning. An ash removal container should have:

- A comfortably large capacity
- Good stability
- A top that closes securely and will not fall off
- Legs or other means of preventing downward heat flow
- A design that prevents spilling when loading

Ashes should never be dumped into a combustible container, such as a cardboard box, and an ash container should never be set on a combustible surface. Hot embers in the ashes can often stay viable for 36 hours or longer after removal from your stove.

# Precautions

- **Smoke detectors:** A smoke detector is inexpensive insurance and is required by most localities. They can either work on batteries, or can be hard-wired into your electrical system. If you have battery operated detectors, it is a good idea to replace batteries on an annual basis (i.e.: every New Year's day, or 4th of July, etc). They will sound an audible alarm in the event of the presence of smoke. Smoke will almost always precede a wood fueled fire.
- **Fire Extinguisher:** If you burn wood, you should have at least one ABC dry chemical extinguisher. The chemical extinguisher is preferable to water because the application of cold water to hot metal stove pipes can cause metal parts to buckle or crack, thereby releasing more fuel to the fire.
- **Carbon Monoxide Detector:** These operate in a manner similar to smoke detectors but are usually user calibrated and record minute quantities on a digital readout before sounding an audible alarm. The chances of carbon monoxide being created and escaping from your properly installed and operated stove are miniscule. You may have other vented appliances in your home that could be potential problems. The investment in a high quality carbon monoxide detector is well worth its cost in the peace of mind it affords.
- **Chimney inspection:** Your connector pipe and chimney, or chimney pipe, should be inspected at regular intervals. Examine the connector pipe for creosote, corrosion, loose seams, or excessive soot. Clean and replace as necessary. The chimney, or chimney pipe, should be cleaned and checked by a certified specialist once a year. A small mirror held at the cleanout door of a masonry chimney will be helpful. For a Class A prefabricated metal pipe, some disassembly is usually required.

## Emergency Procedures In The Event of a Chimney Fire:

If you have a chimney fire or runaway fire, follow these safety precautions:

1. Close the draft damper immediately, with a slow and even motion. This cuts off the supply of oxygen to the stove.
2. Call the fire department immediately.
3. Get everyone out of the house. One adult should stay in the house to check for sparks and signs of fire. Those outside should watch the roof for signs of fire.
4. If there is a danger of a fire, discharge the fire extinguisher into the stove. Do not pour or spray water directly into the chimney as rapid contraction caused by the application of cold water could cause the tile liner in the chimney to crack.
5. After the fire is out, check the stove, chimney connector and chimney carefully for signs of damage. The entire system should be thoroughly inspected by a certified chimney professional.

**Note:** Chimney fires must be put out from the bottom. The entire system must be air tight to suffocate a fire; hence the importance of having a tight cover on the chimney cleanout and not venting two appliances into a single flue.

The length of time it takes to bring a chimney fire under control depends on the amount of fuel in the stove, the rate at which it is burning and the amount of oxygen available to it. The faster it is brought under control the less severe any damage is likely to be.