



It's never too early to be thinking about Heating Safety in your home. Improperly installed and maintained heating appliances can lead to dangerous conditions that put you, your family, and neighbours at risk.

Follow the manufacturer's instructions. Carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions for installing and maintaining your chimney or appliance. If you do not have instructions, call the manufacturer. For masonry chimneys, call the builder.

Inspect and clean your chimney regularly. The Ontario Fire Code requires homeowners to maintain the safety of their chimneys and inspect them at least once a year. Your chimney could have a problem you cannot see. If in doubt, consult a WETT (Wood Energy Technical Training) certified chimney sweep.

Check stovepipes and connections. Ensure screws are located at every joint. Also look for leaching (dark staining or white powder) at every joint. This could be a sign of chimney trouble - consult a WETT certified chimney sweep.

Check for creosote. Creosote can form quickly and is a major cause of chimney fires. Check chimney and flue pipes often and clean when necessary - never let creosote or soot build up.

Check walls for excessive heat. If the wall is very hot, it could be a sign of improper installation of the chimney or stove pipe. Check with a WETT certified chimney sweep.

Install a rain cap. A rain cap should be installed on top of all metal and masonry chimneys. If you have a spark screen around the chimney cap, inspect it regularly for blockage.

Watch for smoke coming into the room. This could indicate a blockage in the chimney or a faulty damper control mechanism. Check it out!

Protect floors and walls from heat and sparks. Keep combustibles safely away from your appliance. Always use a properly fitting screen for your fireplace.

Regularly check for signs of problems. Your heating appliance, flue pipes and chimney can deteriorate over time. Look for corrosion or rust stains on the outer shell of a metal chimney and check for bulges or corrosion in its liner.

Loose bricks, crumbling mortar, broken liners, dark stains or white powder indicate problems with masonry chimneys. These should be fixed immediately by a qualified mason.

When cleaning, allow the ashes from your woodstove or fireplace to cool before emptying them into a metal container with a tight-fitting lid. Keep the container outside.

Give space heaters space: keep space heaters at least one metre (3 feet) away from anything that can burn, including curtains, upholstery, clothing and people.

Install a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm to alert you to the presence of deadly CO gas.