



## **SQUIRE SWEEP ADVICE**

If you have an appliance with a chimney or flue - such as a wood-burner, open fire or inglenook - there are some basic maintenance tips you should know to keep it running efficiently and safely. The following advice is given by all UK fire and rescue services.

### **How often to sweep**

How frequently you need to sweep your chimney or flue depends on the type of fuel you burn.

- Smokeless fuel: at least once a year
- Wood and bituminous coal: up to four times a year if in regular use
- Oil/gas: once a year

### **Wood burning**

If you are burning wood, it should be well seasoned and dry - less than 20% moisture - because wet wood, as well as newly felled wood and coniferous wood(pine), can create flammable creosote and tar deposits in flues.

To determine whether your wood is ready to burn, use a moisture gauge from a hardware store or online shop. Well-seasoned logs also have split ends.

Store wood outside in a well-ventilated, sunny spot, protected from rain.

### **Managing a fire**

Use paper/firelighters and dry kindling to get a small, hot fire going and gradually add fuel.

Do not overload the fire.

Use a fireguard on open fires and do not use it as a clothes drier.

Ensure good ventilation to provide an air flow to the fire to aid combustion.

Do not burn general rubbish.

### **What is a chimney fire?**

If chimneys are not regularly swept, deposits of creosote and tar can build up and ignite in the chimney, causing excessive smoke, embers fall back sparks from chimney, a very hot chimney breast and often a roaring sound. If this happens, CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE.

### **What is carbon monoxide?**

Carbon monoxide is an odourless, colourless and highly poisonous gas released from burning fuels. Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are drowsiness, dizziness, chest pains, nausea and flu-like symptoms.

To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, appliances should be properly installed, ventilated, maintained and serviced. You should also install a carbon monoxide detector, available at hardware stores and online.

For further information about proper maintenance, please ask the sweep when on site. If you have immediate concerns, please contact Squire Sweep on 07504 253467 | 01275 568056.

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