

# WOOD STOVES

*Why a wood stove? The answers are simple – comforting, economical and environmentally-friendly. Whether it's the warm glow of the fire, the crackle of the wood or the deep penetrating warmth, wood stoves have a way of making people feel relaxed and right at home. Yet, in addition to ambiance, wood stoves today produce a low-cost heat that helps protect winter air quality and reduces the threat of global warming.*

## Good News about Wood Stoves

Wood stoves are as popular as ever thanks to more than a decade of research and development by stove manufacturers that has raised the bar for all wood stoves. In comparison to stoves sold during the energy crisis of the 70s, wood stoves manufactured since the early 90s are state-of-the-art appliances that produce almost no smoke. They are also designed to burn wood efficiently – with little tending – while producing minimal ash and using less firewood. And, wood stove construction is now extremely air tight and durable, with clearances to walls that can in some instances be as little as six inches.



## Wood Stoves Designed for Style

What's your idea of a wood stove – a pot-belly stove with a huge black pipe for venting? Think again. Wood stoves are now made from steel, cast-iron or soapstone and are designed to blend in with a home's interior design. While performance reigns supreme, wood stoves are manufactured with windows for viewing and are available in many styles and colors (even red!). And, that pipe...it's now sleek and colored to match the stove.

## Wood Stoves are Zone Heaters

Many wood stoves have the capacity to heat an entire house (if a house has good internal air flow). Yet, wood stoves can also be installed as secondary zone heaters to comfortably heat the areas of a home where the most activity occurs. Future wood stove owners will be excited to know that the heat levels can be easily maintained, for even extended periods of time, with little experience.

## Certified to Protect Air Quality

In the effort to reduce the amount of wood smoke that impacts neighborhoods and communities, wood stoves sold after July 1, 1992 are required to be certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This certification ensures that wood stoves produce less than 7.5 grams of smoke per hour compared to approximately 42 grams of smoke emitted from wood stoves manufactured and sold during the 70s and 80s. Certified wood stoves have a label on that back that reads *Environmental Protection Agency*.

## Selecting a Wood Stove

Much like any other appliance, it is important to spend the time to choose the right wood stove to fit your needs. Before you make your final decision, visit a hearth specialty retailer for experienced advice. A hearth specialty retailer is a trained wood stove expert. He or she can arrange for the safe and reliable installation of a wood stove by a professional installer, such as a HEARTH certified professional. Hearth specialty retailers can also provide advice about available firewood, inform you about how to correctly operate a wood stove as well as what is required for proper maintenance. **For a list of hearth specialty retailers, visit [www.hearthassociation.org](http://www.hearthassociation.org).**

*Wood Stove Checklist on reverse side →*

# WOOD STOVE CHECKLIST

*Information to consider when selecting a wood stove*

**❑ TYPE:** How a stove functions and how it generates heat are two central factors to consider when choosing a wood stove. There are two types of low emission wood burning technologies available – Non-Catalytic or Catalytic. There are also three different types of heat generation: Radiant, Convection, or a combination of both.

**❑ SIZE:** Stoves can range from small to extremely large, but size is more about the amount of heat a stove can create (measured in Btus). The key to selecting the right stove is determining the desired heat level for an area of a house.

**❑ LOCATION:** A wood stove needs to be installed a certain distance away from combustible materials, such as drapes and doors. The distance from a wall can vary from stove to stove, but it can now be as little as six to twelve inches from a wall depending on the model. In most instances, the chosen installation area needs to accommodate a hearth pad, tile or brick, for placement underneath the stove.

**❑ VENTING:** While wood stoves can be vented through the wall to the outside of the house, the primary venting choice is through the ceiling with high-tech piping or through an existing chimney.

**❑ FEATURES:** Most wood stoves come with generous standard features: self-cleaning glass, hidden hinges and reversible flues being just some of the many possibilities. Many manufacturers also offer optional accessories such as blowers, gold plated accents and wall heat shields. Standard and optional features change depending on the stove manufacturer and model of the stove.

**❑ STYLE:** While wood stoves for many years have been traditionally black with gold details, manufacturers now produce a wide variety of looks and styles that have turned wood stoves into an interior design element. Some style choices include the type of base (legs versus pedestal) and varying types of finishes, including porcelain or tile, and colors.

**❑ INSTALLATION:** Does the addition of a wood stove require a building permit in your area? What will your homeowners insurance allow? What are the specific installation issues posed by the construction of your house, such as the pitch of your roof? These are the types of questions that are important to the proper installation of your stove.

**❑ MAINTENANCE:** While wood stoves are very user-friendly and easy to operate, they do require a routine maintenance plan. The Hearth Products Association

recommends that chimneys be inspected annually (and cleaned as necessary) by a chimney sweep certified by the Chimney Safety Institute of America. Other annual maintenance items include the replacement of gaskets and seals while more routine tasks include the removal of ash and the touch up of exterior paint.

**❑ FUEL REQUIREMENTS:** The best fuel for wood stoves is seasoned firewood. This refers to firewood that has been split and dried for more than six months. Firewood also needs to be stored outdoors, under cover, with enough opportunity for air to circulate.

**❑ AVERAGE COST:** The price of a wood stove is only part of the total cost of owning a wood stove. Other requirements include the cost of the chimney, installation, annual fuel costs and annual maintenance.

## COST CHECKLIST:

- Wood Stove \_\_\_\_\_
- Chimney/Installation/Delivery \_\_\_\_\_
- Annual Fuel Costs \_\_\_\_\_
- Annual Maintenance \_\_\_\_\_

## Wood Stove Benefits

- Efficient, low-cost home heater.
- Independence from utilities when the power goes out.
- Clean burning technology produces minimal smoke.
- Ambiance of real wood fire.
- Firewood is a readily available fuel.

This information brought to you by this hearth specialty retailer: