



MEEMIC Insurance Company

Insurance for Family and Friends of the Educational Community

MEEMIC'S INFORMATION SERIES:

WOOD BURNING STOVES



Wood burning stoves have become the largest source of heating related fires in U.S. homes today. Some major causes of wood burning related fires are:

1. Excessive creosote buildup in the chimney. Creosote is a black substance that resembles a tar-like liquid or small black flakes. Creosote burns easily.
2. Inadequate clearances from the unit to combustibles, such as walls, ceilings, floors and furniture.
3. An improperly installed or poorly maintained chimney.
4. Improper installation and maintenance of the appliance.

Wood burning stoves must be used carefully. Here are some basic precautions to follow when using your unit:

1. Read the instruction manual that came with your wood burning stove. If you do not have one, call the manufacturer for a copy.
2. Never use any type of flammable or combustible liquid to start a fire. This includes gasoline, kerosene, lighter fluid, and other flammable liquids.
3. Do not burn plastics, garbage, wood that has been treated with a preservative, paint or other chemical.
4. Children should be taught not to touch or play around the stove.
5. Burn wood in your unit according to manufacturer's recommendations.
6. When cleaning ashes out of the unit, put them in a metal container that has a metal lid. Place the container on a concrete floor or other non-combustible surface, away from other combustible materials outside your home. Do not place ashes in a paper sack or cardboard box; there may still be a hot ember that could ignite the container as embers can stay hot for several days.