

Burn Brighter this Winter

A step-by-step **guide** to home heating and a healthy community

Please take these simple steps to **reduce smoke** from your chimney:

STEP 1 - Remove most, but not all of the ash

It might sound odd, but don't remove all of the ash. Instead, leave about 2 cm of ash at the base. As you are taking out the ash, burn a piece of scrunched newspaper at the back of the heater (it stops ash drifting into the room).



STEP 2 - Open air flow

Make sure the air supply is fully open.

STEP 3 - Scrunch up newspaper (4-5 sheets)

Or place firelighters on top of your ash bed.



STEP 4 - Gather plenty of kindling

Don't try to start a fire using paper and large pieces of wood — it will create a lot of smoke. Instead, start out with small pieces of dry kindling—twigs and sticks - as thick as your finger or thumb. Pine cones can also be used.



STEP 5 - Kindling

Put kindling on top of the paper/fire lighters, adding more sticks in different/criss-cross directions, creating 4-5 layers. Or, you can make a tee-pee type formation. These methods will help create a hot fire quickly.



STEP 6 - Place a few small logs

or branch sized bits of wood on the top of the kindling.



STEP 7 - Add some scrunched newspaper

(2-3 pieces) above the kindling and small wood at the top of the wood heater. This heats the flue, creating good air circulation.



STEP 8 - Strike a match

Light the newspaper or fire starters at the base.



STEP 9 - Give it some time

After about 10-15 minutes, when the kindling is burning and coals are present, add some mid-size logs to your fire. Put several mid-sized logs on, leaving about 2 cm between pieces of wood for a hotter fire (keep air supply open).



STEP 10 - Turn the fan on

If you have one fitted, the fan can be turned on once the fire is well established. Avoid turning the fan on when the fire is low as the fan will cool the wood heater down, resulting in an even cooler fire creating excessive smoke.

STEP 11 - Give it some more time

After about 10-15 minutes, you can put large logs on the fire (keep air supply open).



STEP 12 - Keep the air supply open for 20 minutes before shutting it down

This will make sure you burn off all the harmful smoke compounds at a high temperature. You will create a warmer house and less smoke, benefiting you and your neighbours.



STEP 13 - Check the chimney regularly

If the fire smokes for more than 10 minutes at any stage, there is a problem with the fuel, the operating method or both. For tips on reducing smoke check the section: *If your fire is smoking*, below.

STEP 14 - Adding more wood?

Each time you add more wood to the fire, remember to:

- Leave about 2 cm between pieces of wood for a hotter fire
- Do not put in too much wood, allow for air circulation
- Open the air vent fully and allow the new wood to burn 'hot' for 20 minutes before shutting down.

Going to bed for the night?

Leaving the house?

To ensure your fire does not create excessive smoke you must burn your fuel with the air vent fully open for at least 20 minutes before turning it down for the night, before leaving for work or leaving the house for any extended period.

If your fire is smoking, try the following:

- Add more kindling or scrunched newspaper
- Put less wood on
- Open the air control
- Burn several smaller pieces rather than a single large log
- Safely move a log that's blocking the air supply at the base of the fire
- Use seasoned wood rather than wood that's too wet or green
- **If it is safe to do so**, check your flue. A flue that's clogged with creosote (black, sticky or sooty material) reduces the effectiveness of your fire, costing you money and creating harmful smoke. It will need to be cleaned. Symptoms of a clogged flue are:
 - A heater that's difficult to start
 - Smoke entering the room when the heater door is opened.