



SAFETY TIPS

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UNSAFE CHIMNEYS CAUSE MILLION\$ IN DAMAGE

Firefighters arrive at the scene of a fire, too late to save the home.

Several measures had been taken to prevent fires when the home was recently remodel, said the owners.

However, after talking with investigators, it was determined that the chimney, ironically the only part standing after the blaze, had not been cleaned nor had the masonry been checked for cracks or leaks in several years.

The dense build-up of creosote deposits in the chimney fueled the fire. The deteriorated condition of the chimney allowed flames to escape through the holes in the flue, which then spread rapidly throughout the two-story building.

Fire officials said of the tragedy, "WE see fires like this every year. People get lazy or forgetful and take the condition of their chimneys for granted. Then something like this happens. Fortunately, no one was hurt. But what about next time?"

The production of creosote is unavoidable; it is a natural by-product of the woodburning process.

Unfortunately, it is highly flammable, unsightly, and is a major danger to the safety of your home.

Creosote ignites at 451 degrees, the same low burning point as paper. Temperatures of the gases leaving your fireplace or stove normally range between 300 degrees and 900 degrees. Thus, the volatile creosote can ignite even when the stoves are operated at low temperatures.

A creosote fire can turn into a inferno in seconds. Temperatures in your chimney can reach up to 2100 degrees. Unless it is totally sealed and fire safe, your entire home is in jeopardy.

Creosote residue is sticky, as a fine dust, and travels up with the smoke. When the smoke cools, there is less force to carry the creosote out. Instead, it collects on the walls of the chimney.

After a time, the build-up will soak through porous chimney materials and appear on your walls as foul-smelling dark brown or black blotches.

To prevent this possible danger from happening, simply have your chimney inspected and cleaned. Depending on how much you use your fireplace or stove will dictate how often you need to have them cleaned. If you need to have your chimney cleaned now is a good time to schedule your local friendly chimney sweep to clean and inspect your chimney. Having this done now will give you the peace of mind for the up-coming winter season.