

. Chimney Fire Prevention

Have you been taking your chimney for granted?

Most of us do take our chimney for granted. Like an old favorite, we know it's there, it never breaks, it never lets us down, always reliable..... But is it?

A chimney is an important piece of home safety. A chimney vents products of combustion (smoke and [carbon monoxide](#)) from your home and it allows you to heat your home ([wood, pellet or coal stoves](#), fireplaces, non-direct vent gas and oil systems all use a chimney). Don't take your chimney for granted, schedule a yearly inspection and cleaning of your chimney with a professional chimney sweep today!

What is a chimney fire?

Chimney fires begin in your chimney and are fueled by excess creosote, or soot. Creosote is a product of incomplete combustion, it can take many forms; a sooty powder, a hard black glaze, a black tar-like substance or the appearance of burnt marshmallows. Creosote lines the chimney's walls, this enables the heat venting in the chimney to ignite the creosote.

How do I know if I have a chimney fire?

If you think you may have a chimney fire, leave your home and call 9-1-1.

These are some signs that may indicate a chimney fire. This is not a complete list.

Hearing a "roar" in the chimney.

Creosote chips and debris found on the ground or roof near the chimney.

Smoke or soot in an attic.

Smoke escaping from cracks in the chimney.

Flames at the top of your chimney.

Discolored chimney cap or visible cracks in the chimney or missing mortar.

Since the fire is contained in the chimney - it's safe to let it burn the creosote out, right?

NO. A chimney fire is not a safe way to clean a chimney.

Chimney fires only start in the chimney. Depending on the condition of your chimney the fire can spread through your home through cracks in the chimney's missing or loose mortar, it can also bend metal chimney liners and create cracks. A chimney fire is super-heated, the fire can spread through your house through radiant heat. It can easily spread to your rooftop - or your neighbor's house!

How can I prevent chimney fires in my home?

Yearly chimney maintenance. Have your chimney inspected and cleaned by a professional chimney sweep each year.

A yearly inspection and cleaning aid in chimney safety because they will:

find blockages in your chimney that could result in poor venting, [carbon monoxide poisoning](#) or a chimney fire.

remove creosote built up from last season.

find cracks, loose or missing mortar.

Burn well-seasoned hardwoods. Green wood builds up creosote faster.

. Install a chimney cap to prevent things from falling into your chimney and reducing ventilation.

Safety First!

When removing ashes from your home make sure

The ashes have thoroughly cooled.

You are disposing them in a sealed metal container.

You always store the ashes in a sealed metal container away from your home and all combustibles. Don't store the container on your wood deck.. .