

Cleaning your fireplace and chimney and changing the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

When was the last time you had your fireplace or wood stove and chimney serviced? The following is a timely early winter article submitted by resident Harry Sims.

The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) recommends having your fireplace or wood stove and chimney cleaned and inspected each year. This will increase its efficiency and ensure that it operates as safely as possible.

Chimney caps and spark arrestors can deteriorate over time, allowing embers to escape and rainwater to damage the firebox.

The buildup of creosote, a byproduct of burning wood, on chimney walls can cause a fire. It can also cause smoke and deadly carbon monoxide to flow into your home rather than be released out the chimney.

The type of firewood one burns can affect the build up of creosote and the amount of sparking.

Contrary to what one might expect, well cured oak wood actually creates more creosote than soft pine wood. Western red cedar and hemlock logs are rated highest in spark potential.

At this time of year when people routinely change the batteries in their smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, it is helpful to review what it means when the [carbon monoxide detector](#) in your home beeps or chirps.