

Safety is Growing Concern Due to Rising Energy Costs

Western North Carolina homeowners turning to wood heat need to ensure their chimneys are safe prior to use

Many WNC homeowners are expected to supplement their home heating with wood in the face of rising energy prices. Chimney safety experts caution residents about the need to consult a chimney professional prior to using their woodburning fireplaces or stoves. Creosote buildup, cracked flue tiles or broken clay liners can result in chimney fires, carbon monoxide leaks and other hazardous situations.

Experts agree that chimneys need an annual inspection to help ensure they operate safely and properly. The advice of a chimney service professional is especially valuable, as chimney problems can often remain undetected and pose safety concerns.

Owners of older, masonry fireplaces should be especially conscientious about annual inspections as most brick chimneys were built with clay tile liners that can deteriorate over time or can be damaged by weather, undetected chimney fires or foundation settling. This deterioration or damage can result in missing or cracked clay tiles that leave the chimney compromised. The lack of flue tiles can also provide opportunity for the gases from a fire to penetrate the brick and mortar, reducing the usable life of the chimney and creating gaps in the mortar joints.

Chimney service professionals can improve the safety of a home through regular inspections and maintenance. However, as with other home repairs, some chimney services are recommended to improve performance but are not essential for the safety of the home or chimney.

We advise homeowners to consider the level of urgency and seek a second opinion prior to moving forward with any major prescribed services. Additionally, as with all service professionals, residents should check credentials and references carefully. THE CHIMNEY SWEEP has been serving Western North Carolina since 1979.

info@TheChimneySweep.net

828-586-6904 Northern Jackson, Swain Counties

828-298-6547 Buncombe, Haywood Counties

828-743-2660 Southern Jackson County

828-524-9910 Macon County