



Why use a wood stove? The answer is simple – a comforting and economical zone heater that uses renewable fuel. Whether it’s the warm glow of the fire, the crackle of the wood or the deep penetrating warmth, wood stoves have a way of making people feel relaxed and right at home. Yet, in addition to ambiance, wood stoves produce a low-cost heat.

GOOD NEWS ABOUT WOOD STOVES

Thanks to more than a decade of research and development by stove manufacturers, wood stoves manufactured since the early 1990s are state-of-the-art appliances that produce almost no smoke. They are designed to burn wood efficiently – with little tending – while producing minimal ash and requiring less firewood. And, wood stove construction is now extremely air tight and durable, with clearances to walls that can in some instances be as little as six inches.



WOOD STOVES DESIGNED FOR STYLE

What is your idea of a wood stove – a pot-belly stove with a huge black pipe for venting? Think again. Wood stoves are now made from steel, cast-iron or soapstone and are designed to blend in with a home’s interior design. While performance reigns supreme, wood stoves are manufactured with windows for viewing and are available in many styles and colors (even red!). And, that pipe...it’s now sleek and colored to match the stove.



CERTIFIED BY THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Wood stoves sold in the U.S. are required to be certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This certification ensures that wood stoves produce much less smoke compared to wood stoves manufactured and sold during the 1970s and 1980s. Certified wood stoves have an EPA-certified label on the back of the stove.

WOOD STOVES ARE ZONE HEATERS

Many wood stoves have the capacity to heat an entire house (if a house has good internal air flow). Yet, wood stoves can also be installed as secondary zone heaters to comfortably heat the areas of a home where the most activity occurs. Heat levels can be easily maintained, for even extended periods of time, with little experience.



SELECTING A WOOD STOVE

It is important to choose the right wood stove to fit your needs and your home. Before you make your final decision, visit a specialty retailer for experienced advice. A specialty retailer is a trained wood stove expert. He or she can arrange for the safe and reliable installation of a wood stove by a National Fireplace Institute (NFI) certified installer. Specialty retailers can also provide advice about available seasoned firewood and inform you about how to correctly operate and maintain a wood stove.

WOOD STOVE CHECKLIST

❑ **TYPE:** How a wood stove functions and how it generates heat are two central factors to consider when choosing a wood stove. There are two types of low emission wood-burning technologies available – Non-Catalytic or Catalytic. There are also three different types of heat generation: radiant, convection, or a combination of both.

❑ **SIZE:** Stoves can range from small to extremely large, but size is more about the amount of heat a stove can create (measured in Btus). The key to selecting the right stove is determining the desired heat level for an area of a house.

❑ **LOCATION:** A wood stove needs to be installed a certain distance away from combustible materials, such as drapes and doors. The distance from a wall can vary from stove to stove, but it can be as little as six to twelve inches from a wall depending on the model. In most instances, the chosen installation area needs to accommodate a hearth pad, tile or brick, for placement underneath the stove.

❑ **VENTING:** While wood stoves can be vented through the wall to the outside of the house, the primary venting choice is through the ceiling with high-tech piping or through an existing chimney. For more detailed information on the best location of a stove or fireplace, go to http://static.hpba.org/fileadmin/Affiliate_Info/Best_Practices_for_Woodburning.pdf.

❑ **FEATURES:** Most wood stoves come with standard features: self-cleaning glass, hidden hinges and reversible flues being just some of the many possibilities. Many manufacturers also offer optional accessories such as fans, gold plated accents and wall heat shields. Standard and optional features change depending on the manufacturer and model.

❑ **STYLE:** While wood stoves have been traditionally black with gold details, manufacturers now produce a wide variety of looks and styles that have turned wood stoves into an interior design feature. Some choices include the type of base (legs versus pedestal) and varying types of finishes, including porcelain or tile and colors.

❑ **INSTALLATION:** Does the addition of a wood stove require a building permit in your area? What will your homeowners insurance allow? What are the specific installation issues posed by the construction of your house, such as the pitch of your roof? These questions are important to the proper installation of your stove. A specialty retailer can help you answer these questions. For retailers in your area, go to <http://www.hpba.org/retailer-locator>.

❑ **MAINTENANCE:** While wood stoves are very user friendly and easy to operate, they do require a routine maintenance plan. HPBA recommends an annual stove inspection by an NFI-certified technician and an annual chimney inspection (and cleaned as necessary) by a chimney sweep certified by the Chimney Safety Institute of America (CSIA). Good maintenance also includes replacement of gaskets and seals along with removal of ash.

❑ **FUEL REQUIREMENTS:** The best fuel for wood stoves is seasoned firewood. This refers to firewood that has been split and dried for more than six months. Firewood also needs to be stored outdoors, under cover, with enough opportunity for air to circulate.

❑ **AVERAGE COST:** The price of a wood stove is only part of the total cost of owning a wood stove. Other costs include installation, annual fuel costs and yearly maintenance.

COST CHECKLIST:

- ❑ Wood Stove _____
- ❑ Chimney _____
- ❑ Installation/Delivery _____
- ❑ Annual Fuel Costs _____
- ❑ Annual Maintenance _____

WOOD STOVE BENEFITS

- Efficient, low-cost home heater
- Independence from utilities when the power goes out
- Clean burning technology produces minimal smoke
- Ambiance of real wood fire
- Firewood is a readily available renewable fuel