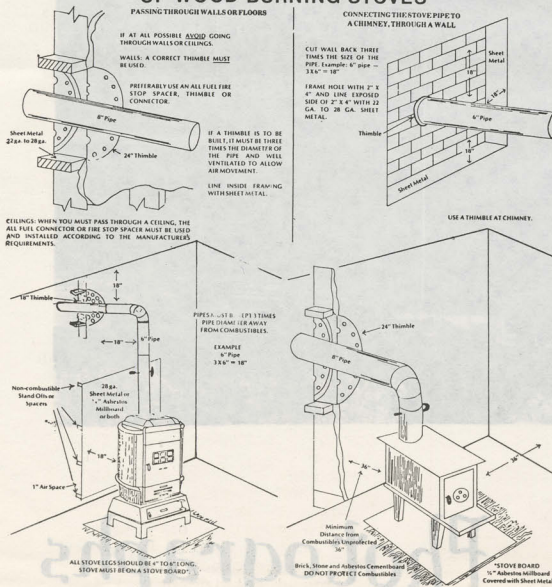


### SUGGESTED PROCEDURE FOR INSTALLATION OF WOOD BURNING STOVES



### Safety First In Wood Stoves

Because of the energy shortage many people are looking to other sources of energy. Wood heat is becoming very popular as an energy source. Unfortunately, very few people know how to select, install, operate and maintain wood burning heating equipment.

The incidence of unwanted fire in the home resulting from wood heating has less to do with the particular manufacture of stoves than with them as a class. They all are dangerous.

- 1) Radiant heat from wood burning stoves is a principal source of ignition of materials near the stove. Many of these materials are to the rear or side of the stove and radiant energy ignites wall materials, furniture, wood piles, or kindling materials.
- 2) Many sheet metal stoves could benefit by the addition of firebrick in a portion of the combustion chamber to reduce the probability the stove metal will burn out in a given period of time.
- 3) High quality casting and foolproof air regulating devices make possible better regulation and management of the intensity of the fire. Ash disposal devices should not be an afterthought of little consequence, but should be carefully designed and executed so as to minimize problems in safe handling.
- 4) A hot stove represents one problem. But a hot chimney connector represents another. These are smoke pipes not fire pipes. When there is a fire in the smoke pipe it takes only seconds for the light gauge metal to become a bright red radiator of heat. Fires frequently result from this source. And they occur when no one is present to observe them. Owners and occupants are the key to successful and safe operation of stoves and smoke pipes. The problems relating to smoke pipes can be reduced by: One, have the heating device as close to a masonry or factory built chimney as possible. The shorter the run, the safer the installation. Two, be sure that the system is installed according to code. Three, install heat intercepting shields. And four, operate the heating device within reasonable limits.
- 5) Mounting on floor: All stoves could be improved by a suspended intercepting sheet of metal beneath the full body of the stove. No. 24 gauge or thicker sheet metal should be used and should extend out at least 18" beyond the stove at the front or the side where the ashes are removed.
- 6) Installers must not compromise on the standards when installing smoke pipes. The risk is very great with improper installations. Please refer to the diagrams accompanying this article for suggested procedure for installation of wood stoves. These diagrams show minimum clearance from combustible materials for free standing stoves as specified in Heat Producing Appliance Clearances, by the National Fire Prevention Association.
- 7) Ventilation is essential, not only for proper combustion but also for safety of the occupants. Normal air leakage in a dwelling is usually sufficient but may not be in a well-insulated house unless a window is left cracked open.
- 8) Stoves are sometimes over-fired, the stoves and their chimney connectors and chimney flues may become red hot. Over-firing, coupled with inadequate clearances and lack of constant attention, have resulted in many fires that would not have otherwise occurred.

Using wood as a source of energy may help ease the high cost of heating in the North Country but the potential for improper management of individual home heating devices is very great. Improvement is a complex education problem. Heating with wood can be safe, only if we know what the dangers are.

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