



NEARLY 40% OF HEATING RELATED FIRES START IN THE CHIMNEY



What Should it Cost?

The Wall St Journal recently surveyed chimney sweeps in the Northeast, including Boston. Here's what they reported. In Boston a 45 minute cleaning cost \$150.00; one chimney cleaned in Princeton, NJ cost \$171.20; Stamford CT it was three chimneys for \$106. So prices vary. Be sure to get quotes.



✧ Ten Simple Rules ✧

Clean, well maintained chimneys rarely catch fire. Prevention is the key. Below are a few simple rules to help you have a safe and warm winter.

- 1) Chimneys should be inspected once a year and cleaned every other year depending on usage, conditions and other factors.
- 2) Hire a professional, certified chimney sweep.
- 3) Be sure cracks, loose bricks, missing mortar, signs of vermin and debris issues are addressed. Consider a cap for the top.
- 4) Use seasoned wood from a reputable dealer. (See sidebar on wood)
- 5) Keep the fire manageable, never too hot or too big.
- 6) Logs should be in the rear. A fire screen is essential.
- 7) Never use any flammable liquids, wrapping paper or cardboard.
- 8) When cleaning ash, put them in a metal container.
- 9) Keep any flammable material far away from the fire so it doesn't catch as well.
- 10) Always have extinguishers on hand and a safety plan for the entire family.



*Wood:
Hard vs Soft
There is a big difference.*

Never, ever use unseasoned wood. Unseasoned will cause creosote build up in your chimney and left untreated could cause a fire. Seasoned wood needs to be dried at least 6 months, maybe longer and will lose 80% of its water content. Drying wood requires stacking so air will flow between the

logs. Buy wood from a reputable dealer. Hardwoods (maple, oak, apple, etc) are best; softwoods (pine, spruce, etc.) should not be used. Do a web search for BTU numbers each type of wood produces.

