

Smoking Fireplaces

Have your fireplace and chimney evaluated annually and swept as needed

Make sure that your chimney is free of creosote and is safe to operate. Hire a professional certified chimney sweep to ensure that your appliance is performing to its optimum performance. We have some secrets that may make your life a little easier.

Preheat the chimney

Just like a chef preheats a stove, you should preheat the chimney. Before you light a fire, open the damper and then roll up a few pieces of newspaper. Burn the paper which will preheat the chimney and push the cold air in the chimney up and out of the way and replace it with the warm air coming off the burning newspaper. Then go ahead and light the fire, as you would do normally.

Use only seasoned wood

Use only split seasoned firewood. Do not use green wood or burn whole logs. Do not burn garbage, painted boards, pressure treated wood, wrapping paper, Christmas trees or anything foolish like this in your chimney.

Open the damper

There is a damper either at the top of the chimney or a metal plate at the top of the fireplace opening. You can open the top mounted damper by releasing the chain mounted on the wall in the fireplace or pushing the lever to open the metal plate damper.

Open a windward window

There is a tremendous amount of air that is needed to supply air for the fire and it is going up the chimney. You need to provide replacement air. Opening a window can do this. HDR can also provide you with a replacement air device that is inserted in the wall next to the fireplace. Please ask your HDR service technician for additional information.

Raise the metal grate

You can raise the metal grate with firebricks. This will allow more air to flow under the wood and may help provide more draft and flow and reduce smoking.

Reduce the size of the fireplace opening

We can show you how to reduce the opening with a decorative metal smoke guard placed over the top of the opening that may help flow and reduce smoking problems. If your fireplace is too large to draft properly, we can help you match the size of fireplace opening to the size of your chimney. When they are properly balanced, your fireplace works much better.

Turn off your furnace

The forced air furnace fan may depressurize the room in which the fireplace is located. Both the fireplace and the furnace are fighting for the same limited amount of air in the home and especially in the fireplace room. The fan pulls air out of the occupied space in the home, heats it and returns it to the house; what often happens is that it will pull smoke out of the fireplace.

Trim back tree limbs

Tree limbs hanging over the termination of your chimney may interrupt the natural flow of the smoke and may contribute to poor drafting problems.