

Safety Site

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Recreational Safety takes Responsibility & Control

CHECK THOSE CHIMNEYS

A chimney fire in action can be impressive. Indications of a chimney fire have been described as creating:

- loud cracking and popping noise
- a lot of dense smoke, and
- an intense, hot smell

Chimney fires can burn explosively – noisy and dramatic enough to be detected by neighbors or people passing by. Flames or dense smoke may shoot from the top of the chimney. Homeowners report being startled by a low rumbling sound that reminds them of a freight train or a low flying airplane. However, those are only the chimney fires you *know* about. Slow-burning chimney fires don't get enough air or have fuel to be dramatic or visible. But, the temperatures they reach are very high and can cause as much damage to the chimney structure – and nearby combustible parts of the house – as their more spectacular cousins. *With proper chimney system care, chimney fires are entirely preventable.*

- See more at: http://www.csia.org/homeowner-resources/the_facts_about_chimney_fires.aspx#sthash.vvjppMDF.dpuf

The Chimney Safety Institute of America recommends that open masonry fireplaces should be swept at 1/8" of sooty buildup, and sooner if there is any glaze present in the system. This is considered to be enough fuel buildup to cause a chimney fire capable of damaging the chimney or spreading to the home. Factory-built fireplaces should be swept when any appreciable buildup occurs. The logic is that the deposit is quite acidic and can shorten the life of the fireplace.

Q. How often should I have my chimney swept?

This a tougher question than it sounds. The simple answer is: The National Fire Protection Association Standard 211 says, "Chimneys, fireplaces, and vents shall be inspected at least once a year for soundness, freedom from deposits, and correct clearances. Cleaning, maintenance, and repairs shall be done if necessary." This is the national safety standard and is the correct way to approach the problem. It takes into account the fact that even if you don't use your chimney much, animals may build nests in the flue or there may be other types of deterioration that could make the chimney unsafe to use.

Q. I heat with gas. Should this chimney be checked too? Without a doubt! Although gas is generally a clean burning fuel, the chimney can become non-functional from bird nests or other debris blocking the flue. Modern furnaces can also cause many problems with the average flues intended to vent the older

generation of furnaces. We suggest you check the areas on gas and carbon monoxide for more information. - See more at: <http://www.csia.org/about-csia/faq.aspx#sthash.5eDYOWGn.dpuf>
It is the mission of the Chimney Safety Institute of America to foster public awareness of issues relating to chimney and venting performance and safety, and to promote the education of associated professionals through technical training and certification opportunities.

- See more at: <http://www.csia.org/#sthash.rY3xpOr0.dpuf>

Call a certified chimney inspector annually. This could save your life, your family, and your home.