



# Public Safety Announcement

Office of the Fire Commissioner

Date: 2005 12 02

## Burn Safely

Fire Commissioner David Hodgins encourages British Columbia residents to enjoy the benefits of a wood fire in comfort and safety by taking a few simple steps.

- Burn dry, well seasoned wood that has been split properly. Green wood is a major culprit in the creation of creosote.
- Burn small, hot fires. A smouldering fire creates more smoke, and smoke equals creosote build-up.
- Never burn garbage or glossy paper. Plastic, coloured ink on magazines and wrappers produce harmful chemicals and creosote when burned.
- Never burn treated wood or ocean driftwood. Particleboard, plywood, or any other painted or treated wood releases a toxic cloud of chemicals and can lead to creosote build-up.
- Always start your fire with newspaper and dry kindling, never gasoline, kerosene, charcoal starter or a propane torch. A fire can get out of hand quickly with fuels other than wood.
- Regularly remove ashes from the stove or fireplace. Store them outside in a covered metal container in a safe area away from the side of the house to avoid creating a fire hazard.
- Ensure that flammable household items such as drapes, furniture, newspaper and books are far away from all heat sources.
- Keep stove doors or insert doors closed unless loading or stoking the live fire. Use a screen in front of the fireplace to keep sparks and embers in.
- At least once a year have wood stoves or fireplaces and chimneys cleaned and inspected by a professional.
- Install working smoke alarms and create and practise a home escape plan.

### Purpose of Public Service Announcements:

In order to raise public fire and life safety awareness in the Province of British Columbia and help reduce the loss of life and property from fire, the Office of the Fire Commissioner will periodically distribute Public Safety Announcements (PSAs). These PSAs address a variety of fire safety issues currently facing British Columbia communities. All PSAs may be duplicated for use as local newspaper, television or radio news releases, or may be distributed to schools or at public events as fire safety messages.

Public Safety Announcements are published by the Office of the Fire Commissioner. For further information, contact:  
The Office of the Fire Commissioner, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, 800 Johnson Street, PO Box 9491, Stn. Prov. Govt., Victoria, BC V8W 9N7  
Telephone: (250) 356-9000 Facsimile: (250) 356-9019 E-mail: [OFC@gov.bc.ca](mailto:OFC@gov.bc.ca) Internet: <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/firecom/index.htm>