



Building Services
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SFR-22
Inspection of Existing
Wood Stoves Installed
Prior to 1991

In the late 1970's and in the 1980's, there were a large number of wood-fired stoves installed in the City and County of Spokane without valid permits. Consequently, the installation of such stoves was not inspected by this department. Since such stoves have been installed, some insurance companies and lending institutions have required proof of inspection when they discovered such stoves in buildings for which they were insuring or lending money.

As of January 1, 1991, any wood stove sold in the State of Washington is required to be listed by a nationally recognized testing agency such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Engineering Testing Laboratories (ETL), ICC, Northwest Testing Labs, etc. Since January 1, 1995, new stoves authorized for sale in the State of Washington must meet EPA emission standards of 4.5 grams per hour (non-catalytic) or 2.5 grams per hour (catalytic), maximum (Exception: Wood Cook Stoves).

Wood stoves installed prior to January 1, 1991, without a mechanical permit, must meet the current International Mechanical Code (IMC) requirements when a permit is issued to inspect an existing wood stove. The permit necessary to inspect a wood stove for code compliance is a mechanical (miscellaneous) permit, which costs \$50.50 plus \$25.50 for each additional wood stove. Listed wood stoves will have specific clearances to combustibles as noted on the listing label attached to the stove. Reduction of clearances must meet the requirements of IMC Table 308.6. Unlisted wood stoves must maintain a minimum 36-inch clearance to combustibles or the combustible materials shall be protected in accordance with IMC Table 3-B. A non-combustible hearth is required to extend a minimum of 18 inches beyond the fuel loading opening and a minimum of 12 inches on all other sides.

Venting must comply with the IMC and International Building Code (IBC). A masonry chimney must have a liner and all masonry chimneys must be directly supported by a non-combustible foundation (bracket chimneys cannot be used as they are not directly supported by a non-combustible foundation). All metal Class A chimneys must be installed according to their listing. Unlisted single-wall chimneys are prohibited within a residence (IMC 806/NFPA 211). All chimneys must extend a minimum of 2 feet higher than any portion of the roof or building within 10 feet of the chimney (IBC 2113.9).