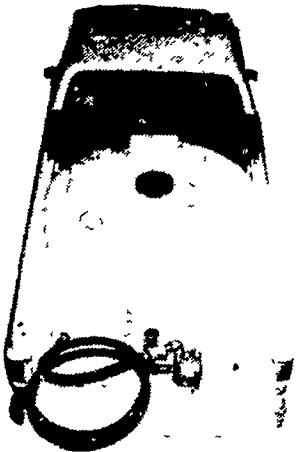


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Wood stoves take commitment

FLEMINGTON, N.J. — The sales of woodburning stoves continue to rise as more and more homeowners look for ways to reduce their fuel bills. And, too, we'd like to cut back on oil imports. No question about that.

For those of us who have invested in a woodburning stove or furnace, we learned quickly that there are some important considerations. Beyond the selection of a stove and its proper installation, there's a commitment! Time.. care.. your energy... and perhaps a little more money than originally budgeted in our planning.

We've been spoiled by the thermostat. A touch of the finger controlled the temperature and comfort in the home.

No so with your new woodstove. Often located in the living room, wood has to be brought in, the firebox stacked, the damper adjusted, several times a day. Ash removal is perhaps every five to seven days. And, no matter how gently you handle the shovel, that super fine dust rises to rest on your walls, furniture and books.

And this to say nothing of

maintaining a supply of seasoned wood. The demand for fuelwood ranges now from one-half to more than a cord per family per year. That's low. Our own woodstove consumes about four cords a year, and it's a very well-designed air-tight.

We stress seasoned wood, especially if you have an air-tight stove. Circulation within these units result in cooler exhausts, often producing creosote deposits in the chimney pipe and flue.

Wood should be cut, split and stacked under shelter from rain and snow for eight months to a year.

If you're buying fuelwood, select the best species: hickory, white oak, apple, black locust, American beech are tops. Next best in-

cludes: white ash, sugar maple, red oak and black walnut.

Other good fuelwoods are black cherry, red and silver maple.

A pile of wood popular with some home-owners is 2 feet high, 2 feet wide, sticks 16 inches long. This is 1/24 of a cord and considered to be the right size for the trunk of a car.

If you cut your own firewood, that's where the real commitment comes in. That means a chain saw, hauling, and log splitter rental.

The commitment is, again, time, care and safety, and money. You should also have knowledge as to what trees to cut.

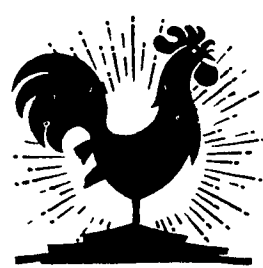
If you're lucky, you may have a friend who has a fence row that he wants removed. Those old wild cherries, after eight months to a year seasoning, burn really well, and produce a lot of heat.

A few safety tips to consider:

- Only use a chain saw if you are experienced or have had instruction in its use and safety.
- Never go out to cut alone, always have someone with you.
- Wear gloves, steel-toed shoes and appropriate clothing.
- Two important items for safety are goggles to protect the eyes and a woodsman's helmet to protect head and face from falling limbs and saw kick-back.
- Cutting and hauling wood is tiring. Don't over-do it. Over-exertion can cause accidents.

Finally, whether it's your own cut wood or purchased, be careful bringing firewood into the home. A friend stopped by the other day. He's a certified pesticide applicator and does a lot of work in homes in controlling wood damaging insects.

He warns that it's easy to bring carpenter ants into the home in firewood during the dead of winter. In splitting wood recently he found great numbers and, once in they pose a threat and are difficult and costly to eliminate.



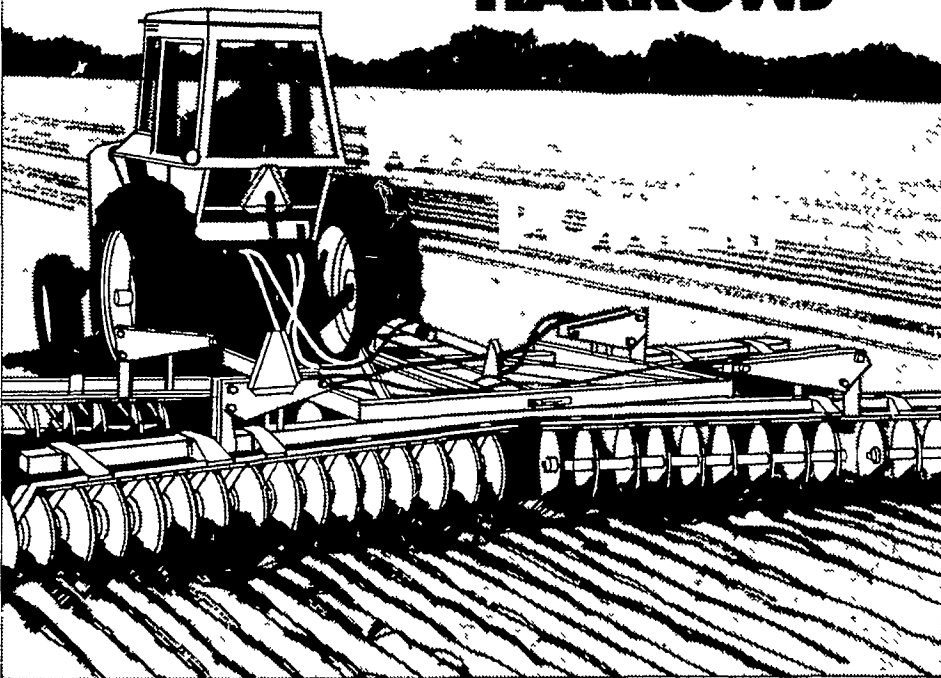
SOMETHING TO
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Store wood with caution

MEDIA — No matter how carefully you stack and cover fuel wood, it can still become infested with wood-boring insects. This should present no problem, advises James J. McKeehen, Delaware County Agricultural Agent, as long as the wood is burned within a year or two. Caution is recommended though, about the amount of seasoned firewood stored in the home prior to burning.

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