

Don't burn your house to save energy

Note: About four hours before we went to press this week, a minor chimney fire occurred at the Susquehanna Times office. The flue pipe coming out of our stove suddenly turned red hot and flames flickered through the joints. The editor, who had read this article, knew what to do: close all the vents and call the fire department.

Chief Charley Johns of the Maytown company responded in less than two minutes, backed up instantly later by a truck and more volunteers.

Fortunately, the truck wasn't needed. Chief Johns cracked our flue open and showed us the deposits that had burst into flames minutes before, and told us how to clean the pipes to prevent another, and possibly more serious, fire. "This wasn't a bad one, but chimney fires can be very dangerous," the chief said.

The information in this article, while it can be useful, is not as complete as that in the booklet mentioned. The booklet entitled "Suggested Procedures for Installation of Woodburning Stoves," has excellent diagrams as well as emergency procedures.

The Times would like to extend its sincere gratitude to the Maytown Fire Company for its prompt, helpful, and courteous action this morning. -Ed.

Many people are buying and installing their own wood stoves these days. While wood is an ecologically and economically wise choice for heating, insurance companies have noticed that many do-it-yourselfers have burned down their houses by installing wood stoves improperly. The insurance people have now put out a booklet, available from your agent, explaining how to install a wood stove safely. Here are some of their tips:

Wood stoves should be located centrally, away from staircases, in the main living area to be most effective. They are not central heating units, and shouldn't be put in the basement to heat the upstairs.

A major reason for wood stove fires is lack of room around the stove. **Don't** put one against the wall — they get very hot, and can ignite wood surfaces up to 36 inches away. You can put a wood stove closer to the wall than that if you

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