e woodstove set?

Installation and maintenance key concerns, Committee says

Heraid Special Increasing home heating costs have been sparking renewed interest in wood heaiing appliances. More and more energy-conscious Canadians

are buying wood stoves and Ereplaces to supplement their home best system, and cut days on their consumption of gas, oil and electricity. Halton Pire Prevention

Committee commends this swing to alternative heating sources, but expressed concern over the increased possibility of fires. Now that colder weather has arrived,

the Halton fire departments report an increase in the number of fires caused by improper installation, operation or maintenance of wood "Shoddy workmanship and

"Proper installation is the key," said firefighter Harold Penson of Milton, 1981 chairman of the Halton Fire Prevention Committee.

failure to follow the manufacturer's directions are the two biggest faults," he added. The committee compiled

this check-list for present and future users of wood sloves: Check with the local building department for regulations and obtain a building permit, if necessary.

2. Inform your insurance company you plan to install a wood stove, because an additional premium may be necessary. Your insurance may not cover the loss of a fire if you have not notified your agent. 3. Follow the manufactu-

rer's instructions on installation, clearances required, floor insulation pads and chimneys.

Make sure the room where the stove will be located, is well ventilated. Wood stoves consume oxygen and a separate ventilation pipe may be needed to feed the stove.

Install only a unit which has been certified by Canadian Standards Association (CSA) or Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC).

Check your clearances from combustible materials (walls, floors, curtains). A wood burning appliance needs greater clearances than gas, oil and electric systems.

Locate your stove away from a hallway, stairwell or fire escape route. An insulated floor pad should be used. It must extend 18 inches in front of the stove and at least six inches on each of the other sides.

rature a wood fire will

generate. Chimneys built for

gas fires are not sufficient for

wood units. Ideally, a wood

stove should be connected to

inspector check your installa-

tion, before you light your first

wood that has been air-dried

for at least six months and

stored in a dry place, away

liave the building

Use only well-seasoned

its own chimney.

store wood or other flammables near a stove. 12. Chimney fires can be Get expert advice on whether or not your chimney can handle the higher tempe-

caused by a build-up of creosote and soot which are formed by the incomplete combustion of the fuel. The likelihood of a chimney fire is increased by burning fuel at a higher than normal rate such as when paper, cardboard, Christmas tree branches, plywood or other scrap materials

from rain and snow. Never

are burned. Never use gasoline, kerosene, charcoal lighter fluid, machine or motor oil or manufactured firelogs to start the fire, Kindling, wood chips or newspapers are salest.

More than one way to get burned, BBB warns firewood buyers

Herald Special

A roaring fire in the fireplace can be a warming. remantic touch on a cold winter's day. Under the right conditions, hesting a room with wood also can be an energy-saving, economical step to take. But be careful when purchasing firewood, cautions Paul Tur, president of the Better Business Bureau of Metropoliten Toronto. There's more than one way to get burned!

As with any purchase, it's possible to minimize the risk of trouble if the buyer knows the reputation of the seller. Also, be sure to check the local market rate and ask a few questions about the type of wood being purchased.

Since firewood is an infrequent purchase, few consumore are aware of the prevailing price. Inquire around

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Marg Clerke

to get the best deal, but be wary of a drastically low, out-of-line price. Why end up with less wood than bargained for or wood that is too green to burn? Verify that delivery is included in the quote and that there are no other hidden costs.

Understanding the quantity: Most people know that wood is often sold by the "cord", but exactly how much is that? A standard cord is defined as a wellstacked pile of logs, eight feet by four feet by four feet. This is the equivalent of 128 cubic feet of wood and weighs about two tons.

Since few home fireplaces can burn wood that's four by eight feet long, wood is usually sold as a "face cord" or "tier". This is a pile four by eight feet on a side and cut into desired lengths. For

example, a "face cord" of 16-inch pieces is actually one-third of a standard cord. "Be sure to understand which type of cord is being purchased and for what price," Mr. Tuz says.

Keep in mind, too, that although a firewood salesperson may talk about a "rick" of wood, there is no precise meaning to the term. It can mean different amounts, depending on who is selling, so be sure to get more specific with that vendor.

In some areas of the country it is more common to buy firewood by the ton. If so, look for the driest wood available. There's no point in paying for extra water.

Types of Wood: The type of wood is also an important factor. Hardwoods like oak. birch, hickory and maple

burn slowly with a minimum of smoke. By comparison, softwoods are easier to ignite because they are resinous, but they burn more rapidly. Examples of softwood are pine, spruce, fir and other

evergreens. That softwood residue is what creates creosote deposits in a chimney. There is a potential danger that the creceote can ignite, so burning softwoods will require more caution and diligent chimney maintenance.

A third category of wood comes from fruit and nut trees, such as apple, cherry, beech or pecan. These smoke with an aroma that resembles the tree's fruit. The wood often sells at a higher price than hardwoods with greater heating value, but fruit tree woods burn with a steady, pleasant flame.

For the most economical

fire, Mr. Tuz recommends the hardwoods. Otherwise, a combination of the woods types can be worthwhile. Softwood can make the fire start guickly, the hardwood will make it last long and the fruit wood will add a fragrance.

Whichever type of wood purchased, make a point of learning what these woods look like when shopping. It's also important to recognize dry, aged wood, which burns evenly and well. Seasoned wood has cracks in the grain and the hollow, ringing sound produced when two logs are clapped together.

Mr. Tux strongly suggests to those using fireplaces this winter: keep safety in mind. Be careful when purchasing firewood and when building a fire, and enjoy the many warm days and evenings ahead.

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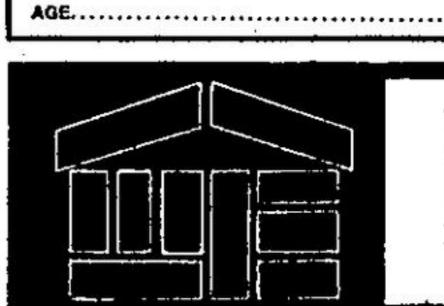
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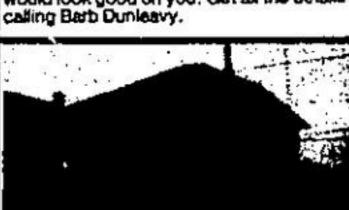
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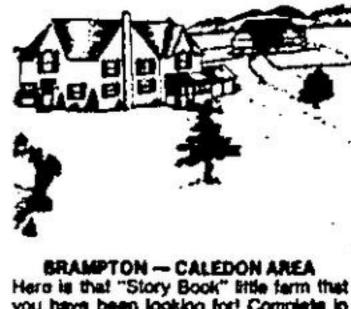
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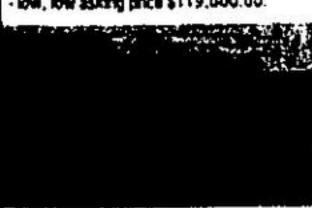
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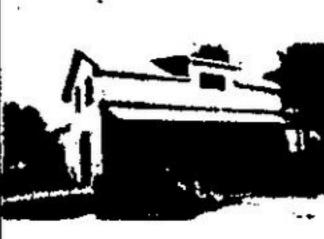
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