

# Cosy up to fireplace; but test smoke alarm

A warm, cosy fireplace can be operated safely by observing a few rules, provided courtesy of your local fire department.

Burn wood, not trash in your fireplace. Except for starting a fire, do not put paper in the fireplace unless you've followed the directions for making safe "paper logs".

Never use charcoal starter, lighter fluid or gasoline to ignite a fire.

Creosote, an oily liquid with a penetrating odour, can coat the inside of a chimney and form a hazardous build-up.

Seasoned wood (split logs which have been left to dry under cover for at least six months) has less creosote than unseasoned wood and therefore is less likely to damage your chimney and give off offensive odours.

Hardwoods (i.e. maples, poplars and oaks) produce less creosote than soft woods such as pine. Soft wood also gives off more ash, reducing the fire's heat and causing huge quantities of soot that hamper log burning.

Burn "pressed" logs only in an open fireplace, never in a closed stove. Pressed logs, the kind sold in stores, give off higher heat than natural logs, so the specific safety instructions must be followed carefully.

Fireplaces should be inspected annually for creosote build-up and structural damage to chimneys. Put chimney caps in place to keep out small animals and birds.

The flue should be open when you start your fireplace, because smoke from the burning logs can fill up the house when the flue is closed.

As a reminder, attach an iron orna-

## Donate car to charity

If you have an old car which you want out of the driveway, why not give it to The Kidney Foundation of Canada. It's one way of turning an unwanted vehicle into a tax deduction.

The Kidney Car Program accepts any vehicle, running or not. The Ontario Automotive Recyclers Association (O.A.R.A.) will pick it up free on behalf of the foundation and dispose of it in an environmentally friendly method. The donor will receive a tax receipt for a minimum of \$75.

To donate your car, call toll-free 1-800-565-5511 and an information kit will be sent to you.

ment to the flue pull which shows when the flue is open.

Use a fireplace screen to prevent embers and sparks from spraying past the hearth and burning people, animals and rugs. Teach curious small children (and pets) to stay away from the burning fire.

Most importantly, especially during fireplace season, test your smoke alarms and make sure they are in working order.

# Exchange homes waiting for teens

The Youth for Understanding international exchange program (YFU) still has 1998 placements open in families from Japan (with departure in March) and New Zealand (departing in January) who would like to open their homes to Canadian youths aged 15 to 18 for a period of 11 months.

The students live with families in their host country as a family member, attend high school, and learn about the country's culture and language during their overseas experience.

YFU looks for students who are flexible, have a spirit of adventure, and who enjoy the challenge of adapting to new people in a new coun-

try. There are no language requirements for students travelling outbound from Canada, but an interest in academics is necessary.

Being an exchange student is a truly unique experience, teaching valuable skills useful in all areas of life. Former exchange students claim that they have gained maturity, tolerance and understanding, while exploring a new culture, making friends that have a background different from their own, and learning a new language.

Youth For Understanding is a non-profit organization which co-ordinates 4,000 exchanges around the world. For information, call YFU's Canadian office by calling 1-800-TEENAGE.



# STORE CLOSING SALE

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