

# **CHIMNEY MAINTENANCE FOR WOOD BURNING APPLIANCES**

**Each year chimneys account for a significant number of residential structure fires in Washington State. In past years, chimney fires have accounted for 12% of all structural fires.**

**The Chimney Safety Institute of America reports that creosote accumulation is the leading cause of chimney fires. A chimney that is dirty, blocked or is in disrepair can inhibit proper venting of smoke up the flue and can also cause a chimney fire. Nearly all-residential fires originating in the chimney are preventable. An annual chimney inspection by a certified chimney sweep can prevent fire or carbon monoxide poisoning.**

**The Chimney Safety Institute of America recommends the following chimney safety tips:**

- **Have your chimney checked every year.**
- **Burn only well-seasoned hardwoods.**
- **Install a chimney cap.**
- **Install a carbon monoxide detector.**
- **Have your chimney waterproofed.**
- **Have your chimney flashing inspected and maintained.**
- **Have a sealing damper installed in your wood-burning system.**
- **Have your chimney sweep ensure that your chimney has an appropriate liner.**
- **Following a violent storm, earthquake, flood or lightning strike, have your chimney inspected for damage—inside and out.**
- **Hire a certified chimney sweep.**