

## Environmental Tip for October: Wood Burning Stoves

With Autumn now upon us and temperatures finally falling, many of us will be thinking about lighting our woodburning stoves. The Climate Change Committee have therefore been investigating ways we can be as energy efficient as possible, save on fuel and minimise pollution, whilst continuing to enjoy the pleasure of using a wood burning stove.

Therefore here are our top tips for using your stoves as efficiently and responsibly as possible:

- 1) Burn only dry and well-seasoned hardwood. Properly seasoned wood has a moisture content of 20% or less, which burns hotter and cleaner.
- 2) Invest in a moisture meter to check the moisture content of your firewood. This ensures you burn wood at the optimal moisture level. (The cost of a moisture meter is between £15 and £20)
- 3) Regularly clean and inspect your chimney and flue to remove creosote buildup, which can reduce efficiency and pose a fire hazard. Schedule annual inspections and maintenance with a professional chimney sweep.
- 5) Burn fires at higher temperatures to minimize smoke and increase combustion efficiency. Use smaller, hotter fires rather than smouldering, low-intensity fires.
- 6) Use the stove's air controls effectively. Use the air controls to start and maintain the fire and to control burn intensity and reduce emissions.
- 7) Burn only wood (preferably sustainably sourced) and avoid burning treated wood, or other materials that can release toxic chemicals.
- 8) In some cases it can be more efficient to leave a layer of ash at the bottom of the stove. This can act a layer of insulation and help to transfer heat back to unburnt logs.
- 9) Ensure your stove is the right size for the space you want to heat. An oversized stove can lead to inefficient burning and excess pollution.
- 10) Consider using a chimney cowl that reduces emissions. For example, take a look at Mid Cat Puriflue : <https://www.chimneycowlproducts.co.uk/midcat-puriflue-solving-woodburning-stove-emissions/>

These can be fitted to new or old appliances and uses technology similar to that found in car exhaust systems. It converts toxic compounds into less harmful gases such as CO<sub>2</sub> and water vapour and releases extra heat energy.

By practicing responsible wood-burning habits, you can make your wood-burning stove more energy-efficient and reduce pollution, benefiting both your indoor air quality and the environment.

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