

What Wood is the Right Wood?

Using the right wood will result in a cleaner, hotter and more efficient fire.

Always burn dry and well-seasoned wood. You can tell if the wood is right if it gives a sharp 'cracking' sound when pieces are hit together or it has visible cracks from the centre of the log.

Unseasoned wood tends to hold moisture so it is cooler to touch and it may have green bark. If the wood you are burning gives off steam or water when it is being burnt then it hasn't been properly seasoned.

What Should you do with Unseasoned Wood?

If you have unseasoned wood, split it and stack it in a criss-cross pattern to allow for maximum air circulation. Don't totally cover the woodpile with plastic as this creates a high humidity environment and will draw moisture out of the soil and into the wood.

Use Wildlife Friendly Fuels

It is tempting to collect wood that is just lying around. However, dead trees and fallen timber can be very important habitats for many kinds of birds, mammals, reptiles and insects.

To ensure that your fuel source is not harming natural habitats, make sure you obtain your wood from an environmentally sustainable source. Ask if your wood supplier adheres to the Voluntary Code of Practice for Firewood Merchants.

Seasoned wood makes a cracking noise when it's hit together and has visible cracks down the centre.

Quick Tips to Burn Bright

- ✔ Use several small logs instead of one large one and stack them loosely so that air can circulate around them.
- ✔ Use seasoned, untreated wood. Unseasoned wood contains moisture which causes smoke.
- ✔ Don't burn rubbish, driftwood, painted or treated wood.
- ✔ Get a hot fire going quickly and use plenty of paper and small kindling to start.
- ✔ Open air controls fully when lighting and loading and keep air controls open enough to ensure your fire is burning brightly.
- ✔ Increase the air supply if you see your chimney smoking.
- ✔ Maintain a bright flame, never let your heater smoulder.
- ✔ Check your chimney regularly, if there is a lot of smoke then increase the air supply to your fire.
- ✔ Have your chimney cleaned regularly to prevent the build-up of creosote and soot.

Some of the information used in this brochure was sourced from *Hot Tips for Cleaner Wood Heating* (2007) produced by Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.

burn bright

Tips for using your wood heater for maximum heat and minimum pollution

You could WIN a chimney and wood heater check to the value of \$100 by completing the wood heater survey

Pick up a copy of the survey at your local library, council office or by visiting www.surveymonkey.com/s/Woodsmoke_2014



Wood heaters, they're warm and cosy.

Just watching the flames can make a dull winter's day brighter.

Wood heating is a great way to heat your home. However, you probably never thought about it, but smoke from wood heaters can also be a major source of pollution.

This brochure aims to show you some easy ways that you can minimise the smoke produced by your wood heater. By following these simple tips your wood heater will generate heat more efficiently and produce less smoke. Not only will this save on the costs of running your wood heater it will also help to improve the air quality in your community.

Wood smoke can be a nuisance not only around your home but also in your neighbourhood. It's also a health hazard because wood smoke can contain fine particles and toxic compounds that can cause respiratory problems.

Wood only burns properly if your fire is getting enough air. If wood doesn't burn properly then it releases gases and particles that are carried into the atmosphere in the smoke.

Start Right to Burn Bright

You need to start right to burn bright. Just follow these easy steps:

1. Open the air controls fully and leave them open for 20 minutes after lighting the fire to allow good air flow into the heater.
2. Get the fire hot as quickly as possible by using dry kindling and plenty of paper or fire starters. Put paper on the top of the kindling as well as underneath as this will heat the fire box faster.
3. Place wood in the heater allowing sufficient space for the air to circulate around the logs.

Keep it Burning Bright

To keep the fire burning brightly and reduce smoke emissions:

1. Wait for the fire to be fully established before adding more wood.
2. Allow air to circulate by ensuring that added pieces of wood are placed with spaces between them.
3. Open the air controls fully for a few minutes before adding fuel and after reloading – wait until the fire is really burning fiercely before turning the air controls down.
4. Don't overload your heater, use medium sized pieces of wood to allow for good combustion.
5. Clean your flue or chimney every year, to remove creosote and soot build-up. Creosote is the sticky black residue that builds up in your chimney restricting the air flow and making your fire harder to start. A clean chimney will increase the heat of your fire and reduce smoke emissions.

How can I tell if my fire is burning well?

Your fire is burning well if the embers are glowing and there are bright swirling flames. About 15 minutes after lighting or loading fuel into the fire your chimney should be giving off a heat haze, with no visible smoke.

Dark smouldering fuel and a lot of smoke indicates the fuel is not being fully burnt. Poorly burning fuel leads to excess smoke and inefficient heating.

Burning Bright Overnight

If you like to leave your fire burning overnight then add several medium-sized pieces of wood to a well-established fire. Ensure the air vents are sufficiently open before leaving the fire so that it has a flame all night.

Check before you leave the fire at night, make sure that it is burning and not smouldering. Smouldering fires produce a large amount of smoke that will drift over your neighbourhood.

Your fire is burning well if the embers are glowing and there are bright swirling flames.



Please contact your local council for further information:

BLAND SHIRE COUNCIL PH 6972 2266
COOLAMON SHIRE COUNCIL PH 6930 1800
COOTAMUNDRA SHIRE COUNCIL PH 6940 2100

GUNDAGAI SHIRE COUNCIL PH 6944 0200
TEMORA SHIRE COUNCIL PH 6980 1100

TUMUT SHIRE COUNCIL PH 6941 2555
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