

## Chimney Fires

Your chimney must be kept clean to prevent fires and structural damage to your property. Clean chimneys can also help the environment by assisting the complete combustion of the fuel, reducing emissions into the atmosphere. Regular cleaning of your chimney or flue also eliminates the build up of soot and clears obstructions such as bird and animal nests, leaves and debris.

Using a vacuum cleaner is not sufficient to clean the chimney properly. Ensure your chimney flue is inspected at regular intervals to prevent fire breaking out of the chimney. Fireguards can prevent serious injury or death and fitting spark guards can prevent a serious fire in your property.

### How often should you get your chimney cleaned?

Type of fuel	Frequency
Smokeless	At least once a year
Bituminous coal	At least once a year
Wood	Every three months when in use
Oil	At least once a year
Gas	At least once a year

### Carbon monoxide

Make sure you are not at risk from carbon monoxide poisoning by only using qualified engineers to install and service your appliances. Fit a carbon monoxide detector and **never** block airbricks, vents or flues. For more information, log on to <http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/co.htm>

### Fire prevention

- Don't use flammable liquids such as petrol or paraffin to light your fire.
- Don't burn paper or rubbish.
- Never overload the fire with fuel.
- Go into the loft occasionally when the fire is alight to check for smoke from cracks, defective brickwork or mortar joints.

### In the event of fire

Use your fire escape plan to get everyone out of the building. Call 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service.

For fire safety information... log on to [www.rbfrs.co.uk](http://www.rbfrs.co.uk), email [community.safety@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:community.safety@rbfrs.co.uk), or call 0118 945 2888

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