

Have wood heaters serviced before warming your home

As the temperature drops and the Autumn leaves fall, Victorians are warned to have their wood heater serviced to avoid a potential fire hazard.

It is important to have a wood heater serviced regularly to reduce the risk of unintentional fire.

Wood heaters and flues should be serviced each year by a registered or licensed Mechanical Services plumber to ensure it operates efficiently and does not put lives at risk.

The VBA's State Building Surveyor Andrew Cialini said consumers need to play it safe when keeping their homes warm.

"Wood heaters that have not been cleaned and maintained properly, present the added risk of flue/chimney fires with the possibility of combustible materials such as built up creosote (wood tar), twigs and other debris catching fire," he said.

"Outside the house, it is also important to keep combustible materials, such as overhanging tree branches, well clear of flues."

Mr Cialini said regular servicing of a wood heater and its flue system addressed key risk factors.

"It removes creosote, or wood tar, that has accumulated in the heater or flue. This substance is highly combustible, it can build up quickly and block the flue, leading to inefficient heater operation and cause fire."

"A check of the flue system will also help ensure it is free of defects and flammable materials such as grass, small twigs and other debris that may be the result of birds nesting in the flue or surrounding chimney cavity."

Tips for operating your wood heater

- follow the manufacturer's instructions for lighting, fuelling and operating the wood heater
- use paper or kindling wood to get the fire started
- only use dry, seasoned wood
- arrange the wood so plenty of air can circulate around all sides
- always leave the air control open for at least 20 minutes after starting or refuelling the fire
- do not overfill the heater or try to burn logs that are too large.

For more information about the safe operation and maintenance of wood heaters visit the [VBA website](#).