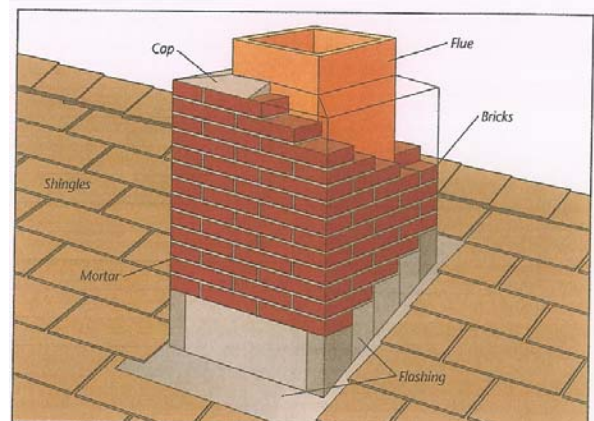


CHIMNEYS

Chimneys

Masonry Chimneys are self-supporting structures. Their foundations exist separately from the house foundation and must be deep enough to maintain chimney stability. In cold climates, they should extend below the frost line.

The Chimney chase is the outer frame of the chimney. It may be constructed of brick, concrete block, stone, metal, or framed with siding. The chimney flue is the channel that carries gases, fumes, and smoke from furnaces or fireplaces. It is sometimes made of clay tile, metal or asbestos cement pipe. The chimney cap, is usually made of concrete, covers the top of the chase and prevents water and small animals from entering. A rain cap may be present over the top of the flue. It is a good idea to install a spark guard if the chimney is not capped.

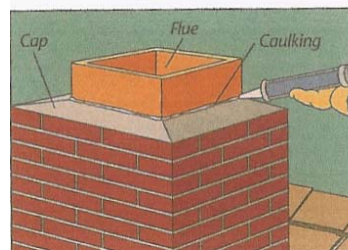


Cleaning and repairs

A chimney that is used regularly should be cleaned and inspected at least once a year.

With a powerful flashlight, check inside the chimney for soot buildup and obstructions such as nests from birds and small animals, and leaves. Look at the flue tiles for cracks or missing mortar. On the exterior, inspect for crumbling mortar between bricks and at the cap, loose or missing bricks, or flashing that has corroded or pulled away from the chimney. All of these can cause leaks.

We recommend hiring a chimney sweep to clean your chimney.



Homeowner Repairs



Bad repair



Safety Tips

Fall is THE time to inspect and clean the chimney - BEFORE lighting a fire!

1. Nothing else should be vented into the flue of the fireplace chimney (a furnace should have a separate vent).
2. Always be sure the chimney flue is open before lighting your fire. You can perform a match test before lighting the fire to be sure you see the flame is being drawn up the chimney and backing up into your home.
3. Never burn garbage in your fireplace. Garbage will create the temperature of the fire to burn hotter, that can cause large embers to ascend up the chimney, fly out and can cause roof, tree and leaf fires.
4. You can install spark arresters to prevent sparks and embers from flying out of the chimney and starting a fire, and to discourage birds from entering. Rain guards and draft deflectors deflect flying embers, rain and drafts.
5. Make your fireplace child and pet safe. Always use a fireplace screen to prevent flying embers from entering inside the house. Keep children a safe distance from the fire. Talk to your children about the dangers of playing too close to any fireplace. **INSTALL A CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM.**