



Causes of chimney fires

As products of combustion exit the fireplace or wood stove, they gradually rise up into the relatively cooler chimney where condensation occurs. As the products of combustion cool, they can form into a sticky substance — creosote; that adheres to the inner lining of the chimney walls. Creosote is black or brown in appearance with a crusty or flaky consistency. It can be tarry, drippy and sticky or shiny and hardened. Often, all forms will occur in one chimney system. Creosote is highly combustible. If the build-up of the volume of creosote is sufficient, it is possible to start a chimney fire. Although any amount of creosote can burn, when creosote builds up in sufficient quantities it can sustain a long, hot, destructive chimney fire.

