

WET WOOD IS WASTED WOOD

BURN WISE, BREATHE EASY

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EASY BY BURNING THE RIGHT
WOOD, THE RIGHT WAY, IN
THE RIGHT STOVE.

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WOOD WISELY, VISIT
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*Save money and your health
by keeping your woodpile dry.*



WET WOOD IS WASTED WOOD

Burning wet wood is a waste of fuel. Because of its high moisture content, extra energy is required to turn the excess water into steam, using up to 30 percent of the heat you are trying to create in the first place. At the same time, it cools the combustible gases—those gases must be hot to burn and create more heat. Burning dry wood is the key to having your stove burn hotter and more efficiently because it takes less dry wood to heat your home than wet wood. That is the difference between burning 10 cords of wood and seven cords of wood during the winter.

WET WOOD IS UNHEALTHY WOOD

Wet wood is unhealthy wood. Never store wet wood in your basement, garage or other areas attached to your home. When logs are wet or moist, mold and fungus can grow and become airborne. This process may cause allergy symptoms such as itchy eyes and a runny nose, and can even trigger asthma attacks—especially if you are already sensitive to this health condition. Burning dry wood is healthier because it burns cleaner and releases fewer emissions into the air.

HOW TO IDENTIFY WET WOOD

Wet wood is prevalent and easily accessible, which is why it is a common problem. Living trees can be up to 60 percent water, and even those dead for several years may have up to 50 percent moisture content. You may be burning wet wood without knowing it. If the ends of the wood pieces are moist, and don't have cracks or checking, that is a sure sign of green or damp wood. A smoldering fire is another sign you are burning wet wood. Dirty or cloudy looking glass doors, and smoke coming from the chimney, are also indicators that either the fire needs more air or your wood is too moist, which creates excessive smoke that lingers inside and outside.

KEEP YOUR WOOD FROM GETTING WET

The easiest way to keep your wood pile from gaining moisture is to cover it — either stack your wood in an open, covered shed, or put a cover over the top of the pile leaving the sides open for airflow. A piece of old plywood over the top will effectively protect the piled wood from rain and snow; however, do not cover the woodpile entirely with a tarp, as air will be unable to flow through the pile, and moisture will not be removed — the wood will not dry much further than when it was originally stacked.



WHY GUESS?

The most accurate way to measure the water content in wood is with an inexpensive, handheld moisture meter purchased at local stores or online. Fully cured firewood has a moisture content of less than 20 percent; the percent moisture content will display on the moisture meter. There are also physical cues that will help you know if your wood is dry. Cracked or checked ends, and peeling bark indicate drier wood. Logs gray in color also indicate seasoned wood. Lift two pieces of the wood and knock them together. Do they feel light for their size and do they make a hollow sound? This indicates dryness.

