building control northern ireland

GUIDANCE NOTE

Topic: **Stoves and flues, guidance for householders**

Ref No: **2012/L/04a**

Date: **November 2015 Amended Feb 2016 Amended Jan 2018**

Standards and Performance Panel

A stove can create a cosy atmosphere and be an efficient means of providing heat in a home. In order to ensure that these benefits are enjoyed without the risk of harm to the building, or its occupants, the installation of a stove always requires a building control application irrespective of whether it is a totally new installation or a replacement combustion appliance. An application should be made before the work commences and may be made by way of a building notice or full plans application. Building control should also be notified prior to the commencement of the work to allow a timely inspection to be arranged.

What will the building control surveyor look for?

- **That there is sufficient air for safe and efficient combustion,**
  Most stoves will require a suitably sized air inlet from outside the building. Stoves that draw any air from the room may not be located in a room, such as a kitchen, with mechanical ventilation.
- **That the products of combustion are safely discharged to the external air without causing a hazard to the health of any person,**
  The flue needs to be sufficiently high, made of suitable material, be of a diameter compatible with the fire appliance, and have been tested to show that it may perform safely. A commissioning certificate from the installer will generally be required to provide suitable evidence of this. Where this is not available a certificate from a competent sweep, or installer, may be accepted as evidence that the flue arrangement is satisfactory.
- **That there are suitable means of giving warning of the presence of carbon monoxide,**
  A suitably located battery or mains CO alarm is required.
- **That adequate measures are in place to protect people from burns and damage to the building from heat or fire,**
  The hearth should be of suitable material and of sufficient size and the flue and stove should be adequately separated from combustible materials.
- **That adequate safety information relating to the installation has been provided in a suitable location,** A durable notice outlining the hearth and flue's performance capabilities should be fixed in a suitable place in the dwelling to allow a compatible combustion appliance to be installed at a future date.

- **That the installation is satisfactory in relation to the prevention of smoke emission.**
  Unless the appliance is exempt from clean air legislation it should be capable of, or readily adaptable to, the burning of fuel smokelessly.

As some of these items are not readily determined by a simple inspection the installer, or some other competent person, should have tested the appliance and issued a certificate that states that the stove, as installed, can function safely. Attached is a safety notice that the installer, or other competent person, can complete, and should fix in a suitable location in the house. This notice may be used to provide the required safety information and a copy of it could also be used as commissioning/ safety certificate as evidence to the council that the appropriate regulations have been complied with prior to the council issuing a completion certificate.

There are inherent dangers and risks associated with all combustion appliances and it is essential to ensure that stoves are regularly serviced and that flues are swept in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.
The part L of The Building Regulations (Northern Ireland), and associated Technical Document L, give further details of what is required. These can be accessed via the Building Control Northern Ireland (BCNI) website, (see below).

In Northern Ireland the installation of wood burning and multifuel stoves (or any solid fuel appliance) is work that is "controlled" under the Building Regulations, as is the relining or installation of flues and chimneys associated with such heat producing appliances. Although qualifications are not mandatory, any person fitting a solid fuel stove must be competent to do so **and should be familiar with the correct procedures and associated regulatory requirements.**

Applying to building control is an easy process; we are here to help you comply with regulations. Either ring your local Council Building Control department for further information and help or use their (or the BCNI) website, and look for a downloadable application form. To make an application fill in the form and pay the appropriate fee to your local Council. The fee is dependent on the extent and value of the task being undertaken. Use the fee calculator on the BCNI website, or consult your local Council Building Control department for further advice on fees.

At the end of the process, if the installation appears to be satisfactory, you will receive a Building Regulations Completion Certificate. This is an important document when it comes to selling your property or for insurance purposes.

The BCNI web site is www.buildingcontrol-ni.com

'This guidance has been produced as an interpretation of a specific requirement of the Building Regulation for use by Building Control Personnel. There is no legal obligation for Building Control to adopt this guidance & is subject to revision in the event of changes to the legislation or other mitigating circumstance.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

This notice/report must not be removed or covered

Commissioning Certificate/ Safety Notice for a solid fuel stove and flue

to be completed by installer or other competent person accepting responsibility for certifying the safety of the installation – Amended Jan 2018 for MVHR.

SITE ADDRESS:

LOCATION OF STOVE:

SUITABLE FOR BURNING:

CHIMNEY LINER:

DATE INSTALLED/ COMISSIONED:

INSTALLED/ COMMISIONED/ TESTED BY:

CHECKLIST	N/A	YES	NO
Is there sufficient permanent ventilation to the stove? (see Table 3.1 of TBL - 2012)			
An open flued appliance should not be installed in a room with mechanical ventilation. If a stove is to be installed in a room with mechanical ventilation it should be a room sealed appliance which gets all of its combustion air via a direct external supply. (When a mechanical fan or heat recovery system extracts air from a room with an open flued appliance, there may not be a sufficient air supply to feed the fire, thus additional ventilation will be required. HETAS Guidance SHOULD BE FOLLOWED IN THIS CASE or alternatively seek advice from a mechanical/service engineer.) **Has a smoke spillage test been carried out, and passed, with the mechanical extract ventilation running at maximum output?**			
Is the flue sufficiently high and structurally sound to ensure that the products of combustion discharge safely? (TBL - 2012 states that if the flue is 4.5m high, then the flue draught should be sufficient. Alternatively, the calculation procedure within BS EN 13384-1 can be used to determine if the draught is sufficient.)			
Has the chimney / flue been constructed from materials and components of suitable size that suits the intended appliance?			
Is the flue suitable where condensing may occur? (Note: Grade 3.16 flexible flue liner is not suitable where condensing occurs, whilst the Grade 904 liner is designed to resist the corrosion caused by condensation. Condensing may occur where a stove runs in slumber mode, or where damp or unseasoned fuel is used).			
Has a carbon monoxide alarm to BS EN 50291, powered by a battery designed to operate for the working life of the alarm, been positioned in a suitable location? (see Paragraphs 2.51 to 2.53 of TBL – 2012)			
Are the chimney, flue and appliance adequately separated from combustible material?			
Where a metal chimney passes through a cupboard or roof space, has a suitable guard been provided? See Paragraph 2.37 of TBL - 2012.			
Where a flue is routed within a void, has appropriate means of access at strategic locations been provided to allow a visual check? See Paragraph 2.39 of TBL - 2012.			
Is the chimney/ flue satisfactorily airtight? (see Diagram 2.5 of TBL - 2012)			
Is the stove located on a suitable, non-combustible hearth, to comply with Diagram 3.9 of TBL - 2012?			
Has a durable information notice, relating to the performance capabilities of the hearth and flue, been provided and fixed in a suitable position within the building? (Not required before 29th November 2006) (i.e. a copy of this completed form placed into a protective plastic sleeve and fixed next to the electrical consumer unit, chimney or hearth will suffice.)			

Other information:(e.g. product trade names, installation and maintenance advice, European product designations, warnings on performance limitations of imitation elements, etc)

Installer's/ commissioner's/ tester's contact details:	Make, model and power output of stove:	Date/Signed :
Phone: **Address:**		I confirm that on the date installed/ tested the stove was left in safe working condition.