
R. M. Property Management

Fireplace Use And Care

Most counties have strict air quality guidelines that prohibit the use of fireplaces and wood burning stoves on certain days. If there is a prohibition in your county and you burn anyway, you may face a fine. It is the tenants' responsibility to adhere to these guidelines. Information regarding these guidelines can be found on most county and city websites.

When using the fireplace, please keep the following safety precautions in mind:

1. Make sure that the flue is open before you start a fire and keep it open until the ashes are cool enough to touch. If you are in doubt that it is open, look up inside the fireplace to check.
2. Keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace opening to prevent hot embers from jumping out while the fire is going.
3. Do not put anything, including paper and kindling, closer than three feet of the fireplace when it is in use.
4. Never leave a fire unattended.
5. Do not use green wood, treated lumber, or painted wood. Burn only dry, seasoned hardwood. Ensure firewood is clean, seasoned and dry before burning it. Never use charcoal or briquettes in fireplace, or anywhere in house.
6. Use a grate (log holder) for logs to prevent damage to the firebox.
7. Never use combustible liquids such as kerosene, turpentine, lighter fluid, or gasoline to start or accelerate the fire.
8. Never burn trash, magazines, newspapers, plastics or other materials not designed to burn in a fireplace. Doing so is illegal and hazardous.
9. Do not stuff scrap paper, gift-wrapping paper, or old Christmas trees into the fireplace. Loose paper could fly out and ignite the roof. Gift-wrapping paper may emit toxic fumes.
10. Do not use excessive amounts of paper or wood to create a roaring fire. A roaring fire may ignite creosote, a toxic chemical that accumulates on chimney walls.
11. If you use artificial or synthetic logs, follow the directions on the package. Never break a synthetic log apart to quicken the fire, or use more than one log at a time. The logs may burn unevenly, releasing high levels of carbon monoxide.
12. Never close the flue if hot ashes or embers are still burning. Embers can smolder for many hours and can rekindle to the point of igniting the room.
13. Do not dispose of burnt logs or ashes until they cool completely. Dispose of cold ashes in a metal container.
14. Do not use fireplace as an incinerator.
15. If the fireplace is used on a regular basis it should be cleaned annually. Cleaning should include the firebox and chimney areas.