



LEICESTER TREE CARE

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What is the importance of properly seasoning wood?

Burning wet wood is harmful to the environment and also risks chimney fires. To comply with the clean air strategy and lessen pollution you should only burn wood that is fully seasoned and with a moisture content of 20% or less.

Tips for Effectively Seasoning Your Wood?

Split wood into manageable pieces

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2. Keep dry and out of elements

Keep your wood dry and out of the elements as much as possible by stacking in a wood store or under a shelter.

3. Time, Time, Time

Try planning 12-18 months ahead of time. By giving your wood more time to dry it will only benefit you in the long run.

4. Ensure good airflow

Stack the wood to allow air to move and flow around it. The more airflow the better. Try stacking wood on top of a pallet and in an alternating patten to keep space to aid with seasoning.

5. FIFO – First In First Out

Make sure to rotate your wood throughout the storage shed to ensure that the oldest wood is being used first and that the youngest wood is given the right amount of time to dry.

What is seasoned wood?

Seasoned wood is wood that has been stored and dried for one entire season, reducing its moisture content and making it perfect for burning in a wood stove, insert, or fireplace. A good target to hit for moisture content is 15%.

Burning wood with higher moisture content will result in your wood burning stove being less fuel efficient, producing less heat (BTUs), and an increased level of creosote emissions. If your moisture content is higher than 35% it can cause damage to your wood burning unit.

How to tell if your wood is properly seasoned?

Freshly cut wood will have moisture content anywhere between 60-80%. It should take anywhere from 12-36 months to get wood to the appropriate 15% moisture level.

The following are good ways to tell if your wood is properly seasoned:

1. Colour Fades

As the wood ages it will lose its colour and become increasingly pale. The paler the wood the better indication that it has been seasoned for a long time.

2. Size of Pieces

The larger a piece of wood, the longer it will need to season. Chances are unsplit or very large pieces are not properly seasoned. When stacking and seasoning your wood make sure it is adequately split prior to storage.

3. Weight & Hardness

As wood dries it loses moisture and therefore weight. As a result, it also becomes harder. Properly seasoned wood will seem, relatively, light and be very hard.

4. Peeling Bark

When wood is very dry the bark tends to peel, fall off, or dry out. If the wood is missing large chunks of bark it is most likely well-seasoned.

5. Splitting/Cracking

In addition to bark falling off well-seasoned wood, dry wood tends to split or crack as it is drying.

6. Sound of Hitting

When you hit two pieces of dry wood together you will hear a hollow thud, however when wet wood is hit it will be a dull sound.

Split Test – *When all else fails try simply splitting a piece of wood – if the wood is dry in the center the wood has been somewhat seasoned. For an accurate reading however, try purchasing and using a moisture meter.*

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