

We Don't Have Wood Burning Fireplaces!

By John Sisker

A few nights ago, I went outside through our carport to check on a couple of things. It had been raining, the air was still pretty cold, and I could easily catch the smell of wood-burning fireplaces in the air. While I do enjoy such a pleasant aroma, there is only one problem. We don't have wood burning fireplaces.

The fireplaces we do have are meant and designed to be gas burning only. In fact, the flume is really just a small narrow pipe to the roof for the heat, therefore, any wood burning in these fireplaces presents such a major fire hazard, that I was told by the Board; the next time I smelled a wood burning fireplace, to immediately call the fire department. Yes, it is that serious!

The fire department would immediately respond, hunt down the culprit(s), who would probably receive a pretty stiff fine. Is this an overreaction? No, not considering we would easily lose half of Newport Terrace because of such carelessness.

Yet, in all fairness, some may claim they did not know. Well, now they do. In addition, some may think there is an ample supply of firewood in the Meadow from all the eucalyptus trees that had to be cut down. Again, not a good idea. Eucalyptus wood burns very hot, much more so than most other woods. It might make for a good fire in a beach fire ring, but not in any of our gas burning fireplaces. Plus, eventually what's left of the removed trees in the Meadow, will be placed along the trails as tree stump seats, and are not meant to be used as free firewood for anyone.

The bottom line is, don't burn any type of wood, paper, or even those paper logs in our fireplaces. They are gas only... that is it! I could go into the more technical reasons as to why using wood is a major disaster in the making, such as the excess build-up of a certain chemical in the wood that quickly narrows the gas vent pipe, sparks from the wood, no spark arrestors, excess smoke, plus many other reasons. However, I think you should all get the point by now.

Think you can burn wood anyway, who would know? For one, I would! Believe me, this nose knows!

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