

Woodstove Insert and EPA Compliance Efforts: Mammoth Lakes Fireplace Regulations

In much of the Eastern Sierra we rely on wood burning stoves and fireplaces as a means of warming our homes. In Mammoth there are two ordinances which property owners and buyers should become familiar with: EPA Woodstove Compliance Requirements and Woodstove Insert and Retrofit Compliance.

The first, EPA Compliance, is an ordinance implemented in 1990 to maintain clean mountain air. Older stoves which do not meet EPA standards are replaced with cleaner burning EPA complaint stoves, pellet stoves, or fireplaces which do not burn solid fuel. The buyer of a property in Mammoth assumes responsibility for the replacement, removal or rendering the appliance inoperable and has 60 days from the completion of the transfer to bring the appliance into compliance. Open fireplaces which burn wood are required to be brought into compliance or made inoperable.

The second, Woodstove Insert and Retrofit Compliance passed in 2013, requires that flues not initially built to withstand the heat created by more modern wood appliance require a greater separation between flu pipes and combustible materials within the Chimney. This ordinance does not apply to free standing stoves or to fireplaces where solid fuel is not used, such as propane fireplaces. Compliance with this ordinance is the responsibility of the buyer with general estimates to retrofit a flue often between \$ 7,000 - \$ 9,000. Buyers have 60 days to begin compliance with the ordinance, and six months to comply. Extensions of up to one or two years may be requested.



Freestanding EPA Stove



Insert Pellet Wood Stove



Freestanding Woodstove



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FOUR FIREPLACE OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:

Note: Gas log sets are not permitted as a remedy

1. No rebuild of the interior framing will be required due to the low heat build-up of these choices. You may install either of the following EPA-II appliances: (a) a pellet stove, either free-standing or insert or (b) a heater rated gas burning insert. Approximate cost \$3600 to \$4500, which includes stove, pipe, permit and labor.

2. If your existing appliance is already EPA-II rated then you need only rebuild the interior framing with non-combustible materials. This requires the demolition of the wall, which would include any rock façade you may already have. In this case, we would re-use any salvageable materials allowable. Approximate cost for code requirements would be \$2650 to \$3650, which includes demo, new framing, drywall, paint and any disposal. Façade material would be extra, approx. \$600 and up depending on design choice. This option would also allow you to add wiring for lights, television or other electronics, within the wall, at an additional fee.

3. If your existing appliance is not EPA-II rated you would need option 2 in addition to a new EPA-II rated wood-burning stove insert. Approximate cost \$3400 to \$4200 plus \$3250 to \$4250 for rebuild.

4. The final option is to remove the entire wall structure (interior and zero-clearance can, fireplace and pipe) and install a wood-burning fireplace. This appliance is EPA-II rated and does not require a non-combustible wall. Additionally, it offers a larger firebox and larger viewing glass than a standard fireplace insert. Approximate cost \$7900 to \$10200. Cost includes, demo, disposal, new framing, appliance, pipe, permit, drywall, rock or paint and labor. This would vary depending on your choice of drywall or rock façade.

Other resources:

- Mammoth Lakes Fire District at (760) 934-2300, or their website <http://mammothlakesfd.intuitwebsites.com>. The website will offer photos and further details to expand on the issue at hand.
- Town Mammoth Lakes Building Department at (760) 934-8989, ex 244.



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