



Troubleshooting and Maintenance: Wood Stoves

What product should I use to clean the glass?

There exist many specialized products on the market. The majority works very well. They are usually sold at both specialty stores and home improvement centers. The retailer where you have bought your stove will usually be able to suggest a brand. Note that there is no miracle product. If your glass has not been cleaned periodically, creosote build ups and combustion residues will be very hard to remove. Your glass will probably not retrieve its original appearance. Replacing the glass is always an option, but it will be costlier. No matter what product you use, make sure you always clean the glass very well with a cloth. Otherwise, a white deposit may appear on the glass when you light up the stove.

When do I need to replace the door gasket and what type of gasket do I have to buy?

The gasket is there to ensure that your stove remains air tight, thus providing you with the maximum burn time and reducing the risk of overheating. How frequently you replace the gasket really depends on how often you fire your stove. Most Drolet stoves have an adjustable handle that enables you to increase the useful life of your gasket by tightening the door when it becomes loose. However, when you can no longer adjust the door, when the gasket becomes really hard, and when you notice a gap between the door and the stove, it is time to replace the gasket. If you fire your stove on a regular basis during all winter, you may need to replace the gasket before every heating season. We strongly suggest that you use the genuine gasket supplied by the manufacturer. The genuine gasket has a better density and comes with a special adhesive. It will last much longer. Avoid liquid glue and low-density gasket, with large and flabby knits. To obtain

the genuine gasket replacement kit for your stove, please consult our "accessories" section. When do I need to replace the firebrick and what type of firebrick do I have to buy?

When do I need to replace the firebrick and what type of firebrick do I have to buy?

The firebricks in your stove are there to protect the steel from the excessive heat of the flames and embers. Without firebricks, your stove would wear out prematurely. It could also become too hot and cause objects or structures nearby to catch fire. If you notice that some firebricks are disintegrated, and the steel is directly in contact with the fire or embers, replace the firebricks immediately. If you only notice cracks on some firebricks, it is not necessary to replace them. The frequency at which you will change your firebricks depends on how often you use your stove.

There are different sizes of firebricks. Most stores will sell firebricks with a dimension of 4,5"X9"X1,25". These firebricks are adequate for many stoves but will not fit on all Drolet units. It is preferable that you visit our parts section to clearly identify the type of firebrick that you need. Some models, like the HT1200, HT2000, Sawman, Vision XL, and Royal Comfort have some larger, non-standard firebricks that are only available on special order.

Why do I get too much heat?

Possible causes and solutions:

The air control mechanism is completely open.

Solution: Gradually close the air control mechanism to keep the flue temperature within the comfort zone (between 250oF and 475oF). The thermometer should be located on the flue, about 18 inches above the unit. If you do not have a chimney thermometer and would like to get one, please consult our "accessories" section.

The door gasket is worn out and lets too much air into the heater.

Solution: Replace the gasket using a genuine adhesive and gasket kit. Please consult our "accessories" sections.

You are putting too much wood into the heater.

Solution: Put less wood. The unit will not produce as much heat and will not heat as long.

Why does the fire go out when I close the stove door?

Possible causes and solutions:

The wood that you are using is too humid.

Solution: Make sure you use good, seasoned wood. The wood you burn plays an important role in the overall performance of your heater. Your wood should have been properly dried for approximately one year. Storage is also key. Wood that has been cut for one, two or even more years, will not necessarily be dry if it has been stored in poor conditions. Under extreme conditions, it may have rotten instead of drying. Smaller pieces of wood will dry faster. The wood should be stored in a place where the grass is not too long, and where the wind will be able to circulate between the logs. A 12" to 24" gap should be kept between the cords. The wood should be placed in the sunniest area and should be protected from the rain and the snow on top, but not the sides.

The air control mechanism is not open enough.

Solution: Adjust the air control mechanism to keep the flue temperature within the comfort zone (between 250oF and 475oF) on your chimney thermometer. The air control mechanism must always be closed gradually. You need to obtain a good bed of red embers and the logs must be completely lit up before you close the air control completely. This can easily take up to one hour. If you do not have a chimney thermometer and would like to get one, please consult our "accessories" section.

The logs that you are using are too big.

Solution: Use smaller pieces of wood and place them to allow proper air circulation between the logs. The same weight of wood cut in many small pieces will produce more heat than fewer, larger logs. Only add big logs when you have a good bed of red embers. Logs with a diameter exceeding 6 inches should always be split. Avoid stacking logs to the top of the firebox.

The chimney draft is too weak.

Solution #1: In many cases, a weak draft is simply due to insufficient heat in the exhaust system. Build a small, intense fire, and leave the door ajar (never leave the heater

unattended). Before inserting larger logs, use dry kindling to obtain a good bed of red embers. Gradually increase the size of the logs. Close the unit's door when you reach a flue temperature of approximately 475oF on the chimney thermometer. Leave the air intake fully open for approximately 15 minutes. Then, gradually close the air intake control. Note that there is no danger in letting the temperature inside the flue reach approximately 700oF during start-up. This is even favorable to properly start your heater. You must however avoid maintaining excessive temperatures (above the comfort zone on your thermometer) during a long period of time. Your chimney thermometer should be positioned on the exhaust pipe, approximately 18 inches above the unit. If you do not have a chimney thermometer and would like to get one, please consult our "accessories" section.

Solution #2: Your heater may not have all the oxygen it needs to allow for a sufficient draft. You first need to ensure that the room where the unit is located is sufficiently large and well ventilated. Open the nearest window by approximately 2 inches. If you notice a significant improvement, it is a sign that the units needs more oxygen. The room may be too insulated or too small. Without an additional source of oxygen, the draft will remain weak and cause the fire to go out.

Solution #3: The chimney may be too short. To obtain a sufficient draft, your chimney must have a minimum height. A minimum height of 12 feet (from the top of the heater to the end of the chimney) will generally provide a sufficient draft. PLEASE NOTE: Longer is not always better. A chimney that is excessively long may be difficult to warm-up and control.

Solution #4: Your exhaust system may be too tortuous or may lack a sufficiently steep slope. Ideally, your exhaust system should not have more than one 90o elbow. Furthermore, all horizontal sections should be as short as possible and have a minimum slope of ¼" per foot.

Solution #5: Your exhaust system may be oversized. When your chimney is oversized, the volume of air that needs to be warmed-up is larger. It is therefore difficult to reach temperatures that will allow for a sufficient draft. Most EPA certified heaters have a 6" flue outlet (152mm). If your exhaust system does not have a 6" diameter, you can insert a stainless liner with a 6" diameter inside the exhaust system. Non-EPA heaters often have a flue outlet that varies from 6" to 8". Insert a liner with a diameter equal to the unit's flue outlet.

Why does the glass get so dirty?

Possible causes and solutions:

The wood that you are using is too humid.

Solution: Make sure you use good, seasoned cord wood. The wood you burn plays an important role in the overall performance of your heater. Your wood should have been properly dried for approximately one year. Storage is also key. Wood that has been cut for one, two or even more years, will not necessarily be dry if it has been stored in poor conditions. Under extreme conditions, it may have rotten instead of drying. Smaller pieces of wood will dry faster. The wood should be stored in a place where the grass is not too long, and where the wind will be able to circulate between the logs. A 12" to 24" gap should be kept between the cords. The wood should be placed in the sunniest area and should be protected from the rain and snow on top, but not on the sides.

The logs are positioned too close to the glass and are obstructing the air flow that is necessary to keep the glass clean.

Solution: Make sure to keep a minimum gap of 4" between the logs and the glass.

The chimney draft is too weak.

Solution #1: In many cases, a weak draft is simply due to insufficient heat in the exhaust system. Build a small, intense fire, and leave the door ajar (never leave the heater unattended). Before inserting larger logs, use dry kindling to obtain a good bed of red embers. Gradually increase the size of the logs. Close the stove door when you reach a flue temperature of approximately 475oF on the chimney thermometer. Leave the air intake fully open for approximately 15 minutes. Then, gradually close the air intake control. Note that there is no danger in letting the temperature inside the flue reach approximately 700oF during start-up. This is even favorable to properly start your heater. You must however avoid maintaining excessive temperatures (above the comfort zone on your thermometer) during a long period of time. Your chimney thermometer should be positioned on the exhaust pipe, approximately 18 inches above the unit. If you do not have a chimney thermometer and would like to get one, please consult our "accessories" section.

Solution #2: Your heater may not have all the oxygen it needs to allow for a sufficient draft. You first need to ensure that the room where the stove is located is sufficiently large and well ventilated. Open the nearest window by approximately 2 inches. If you notice a significant improvement, it is a sign that the unit needs more oxygen. The room

may be too insulated or too small. Without an additional source of oxygen, the draft will remain weak and cause the glass stay dirty.

Solution #3: The chimney may be too short. To obtain a sufficient draft, your chimney must have a minimum height. A minimum height of 12 feet (from the heater to the chimney cap outside the house) will generally provide a sufficient draft.

PLEASE NOTE: Longer is not always better. A chimney that is excessively long may be difficult to warm-up and control.

Solution #4: Your exhaust system may be too tortuous or may lack a sufficiently steep slope. Ideally, your exhaust system should not have more than one 90o elbow. Furthermore, all horizontal sections should be as short as possible and have a minimum slope of ¼" per foot.

Solution #5: Your exhaust system may be oversized. When your chimney is oversized, the volume of air that needs to be warmed-up is larger. It is therefore difficult to reach temperatures that will allow for a sufficient draft. Most EPA certified heaters have a 6" flue outlet (152mm). If your exhaust system does not have a 6" diameter, you can insert a stainless liner with a 6" diameter inside the exhaust system. Non-EPA units often have a flue outlet that varies from 6" to 8". Insert a liner with a diameter equal to the heater's flue outlet.

Why doesn't my stove produce enough heat?

Possible causes and solutions:

Your wood is of poor quality or too humid.

Solution: Make sure you use good, seasoned wood. The wood you burn plays an important role in the overall performance of your stove. Your wood should have been properly dried for about one year. Furthermore, it is better to use hardwood, such as oak, maple, beech or ash. Hardwood will burn hotter and cleaner. Softwood (such as spruce and pine), on the other hand, will produce less heat for the same volume and will have a lot of sap, which increases the risk of creosote buildup in your chimney. Storage is also key. Wood that has been cut for one, two or even more years, will not necessarily be dry if it has been stored in poor conditions. Under extreme conditions, it may have rotten instead of drying. Smaller pieces of wood will dry faster. The wood should be stored in a place where the grass is not too long, and where the wind will be able to

circulate between the logs. A 24" to 48" gap should be kept between the cords. The wood should be placed in the sunniest area and should be protected from the rain and the snow on top, but not the sides.

The air control mechanism is not open enough.

Solution: Adjust the air control mechanism to keep the flue temperature within the comfort zone (between 250 and 475oF) on your chimney thermometer. The air control mechanism must always be closed gradually. You need to obtain a good bed of red embers and the logs must be completely lit up before you can close the air control completely. This can easily take up to one hour. If you do not have a chimney thermometer and would like to get one, please consult our "accessories" section.

The logs that you are using are too big.

Solution: Use smaller pieces of wood and place them to allow proper air circulation between the logs. The same weight of wood cut in many small pieces will produce more heat than fewer, larger logs. Only add big logs when you have a good bed of red embers. Logs with a diameter exceeding 6 inches should always be split. Avoid stacking logs to the top of the stove.

The chimney draft is too weak.

Solution #1: In many cases, a weak draft is simply due to insufficient heat in the exhaust system. Build a small, intense fire, and leave the door ajar (never leave the stove unattended). Before inserting larger logs, use dry kindling to obtain a good bed of red embers. Gradually increase the size of the logs. Close the stove door when you reach a flue temperature of approximately 475oF on the chimney thermometer. Leave the air intake open for approximately 15 minutes. Then, gradually close the air intake control. Note that there is no danger in letting the temperature inside the flue reach approximately 700oF during start-up. This is even favorable to properly start your stove. You must however avoid maintaining excessive temperatures (above the comfort zone on your thermometer) during a long period of time. Your chimney thermometer should be positioned on the exhaust pipe, approximately 18 inches above the stove. If you do not have a chimney thermometer and would like to get one, please consult our accessories section.

Solution #2: Your stove may not have all the oxygen it needs to allow for a sufficient draft. You first need to ensure that the room where the stove is located is sufficiently large and well ventilated. Open the nearest window by approximately 2 inches. If you

notice a significant improvement, it is a sign that the stove needs more oxygen. The room may be too insulated or too small. Without an additional source of oxygen, the draft will remain weak.

Solution #3: The chimney may be too short. To obtain a sufficient draft, your chimney must have a minimum height. A minimum height of 12 feet (from the stove to the end of the chimney) will generally provide a sufficient draft. PLEASE NOTE: Longer is not always better. A chimney that is excessively long may be difficult to warm-up and control.

Solution #4: Your exhaust system may be too tortuous or may lack a sufficiently steep slope. Ideally, your exhaust system should not have more than one 90° elbow. Furthermore, all horizontal sections should be as short as possible and have a minimum slope of ¼" per foot.

Solution #5: Your exhaust system may be oversized. When your chimney is oversized, the volume of air that needs to be warmed-up is larger. It is therefore difficult to reach temperatures that will allow for a sufficient draft. Most EPA certified stoves have a 6" flue outlet (152mm). If your exhaust system does not have a 6" diameter, you can insert a stainless liner with a 6" diameter inside the exhaust system. Non-EPA stoves often have a flue outlet that varies from 6" to 8". Insert a liner with a diameter equal to the stove's flue outlet.

If you have verified points 1 through 4 and your stove works fine, but still does not heat enough, you may be asking your stove more than what it can realistically give you. Stoves are used for "zone" heating. It is normal that the heat be distributed unevenly inside your home. It will always be colder in the rooms that are distant from the stove. Furthermore, since heat rises, a stove located at the ground floor level will not heat your basement.

Solution: It is possible to increase heat circulation between the floors by installing floor traps. The location of your stove is also important. Try to install it in a central location. If you want to heat both your basement and the ground floor, install your stove in the basement. The heat will rise to the upper floors. Verify that the area you try to heat is within the capacity of your stove. The heating capacity of your stove is indicated on the printed literature supplied by Drolet, or in the technical data section on our web site. Keep in mind that your stove's heating capacity is calculated under the assumption that

the house is in normal conditions. The actual heating capacity of a stove may be too low in situations where a house is poorly insulated, or highly exposed to wind. If you already have a stove with a high heating capacity (such as a Sawman or HT2000) that works normally but does not heat enough, you probably need a central heating system, such as a wood furnace.

REMEMBER: Bigger is not always better. A large stove located in small, airtight room, may not have enough oxygen to operate normally. The advice in this section is provided under the assumption that the stove is in an open, well ventilated area.

Why has the paint turned white and how do I re-paint my heater?

As a result of the high temperatures reached on the surface of any wood heater, most types of high temperature paint will tend to discolor over time. However, if your paint has completely turned white in some areas shortly after you purchased your heater, it is a sign that it may have overheated. Many things can cause a unit to overheat. Here is a brief list:

- The air intake control has been left fully open and flue temperatures have reached excessive levels for a long period of time
- The chimney draft is excessive
- The door was left ajar for a long period with a fire going
- The door gasket is worn out
- Firebricks have been damaged or disintegrated and have not been replaced
- Pressure treated wood or other bi-products of wood were used as fuel
- Manufactured logs were used in the heater

It is important to identify why the heater has overheated. Otherwise, it may wear out prematurely. Make sure you use a chimney thermometer and keep flue temperatures within the comfort zone of 250oF to 475oF. You can paint your heater and make it look brand new. If the paint has not peeled off, you need to prepare the surface with a 180-grade sand paper. Then, repaint the heater with the original high temperature aerosol paint. If the paint has peeled off, you need to prepare the surface with a 180-grade sand paper and remove all the paint until you reach the steel. You can find the original high temperature paint for your heater by consulting our "accessories" section.

Why is there smoke when I use my stove?

Possible causes and solutions:

Your stove is new and thin smoke is coming out of the surface of the unit.

Solution: This is normal when your stove is new and has never been used. The paint needs to be "cured". You need to heat your stove two or three of times before the curing process is completed. Simply open a window in the room where the stove is located. The amount of smoke produced by the curing process should be very limited.

The chimney is under negative pressure, which causes a smoking problem. (Consult the drawings under the question "What do the words draft and negative pressure mean?").

Solution#1: The chimney may simply be too cold. Light-up a small quantity of newspaper in the stove, as close as possible to the flue outlet. Leave the door slightly ajar. This small fire will slowly heat-up the chimney, until it is hot enough to create a normal draft inside the exhaust system. If needed, slowly increase the quantity of newspaper. When you realize that smoke is being evacuated normally through the exhaust system, you can build a normal fire. If you have a Class A insulated chimney that climbs along the outside wall of your house, it is possible to cover it up to protect it from the wind and the cold. A covered chimney will heat-up faster.

Solution #2: Negative pressure may be caused by air-moving devices, such as a range hood, a bathroom fan, or an air exchanger. Check if smoking problems occur when those devices are working. If it is the case, make sure you turn them off when you use your stove. Otherwise, you need to make sure that the air leaving the room is replaced by air from outside the house. For instance, you can open a window slightly (by one or two inches). Ideally, the source of fresh air should be located as close as possible to the stove.

Solution #3: Negative pressure may be caused by wind, due to the interference from a nearby structure. To eliminate such interference, the extremity of your chimney should be at least two feet higher than any structure (such as a big tree or a building) located within ten feet of your chimney. Furthermore, you must make sure that the extremity of your chimney is at least two feet higher than the highest point on your roof. Otherwise, the roof of your house itself may cause an interference with your chimney.