



## **IAFCI Position Statement Dated 12/11/08**

### **RE: Venting Systems for Residential Furnaces, Boilers and Water Heaters**

#### **Position:**

It is the position of the IAFCI Board of Directors that the installation of any listed solid-fuel, oil-burning or gas-burning appliance in conflict with the manufacturer's instructions, applicable building and mechanical codes or adopted local ordinances or regulations, is considered a potential hazard that may result in a structure fire, personal injury, property damage, loss of efficiency, durability or performance. This action is considered detrimental to the Hearth and HVAC Industries as well as the clients that it represents. This position is based on the minimum requirements determined by historical performance, the testing standards as represented by the manufacture's installation instructions and the minimum code requirements. Any improper installation or inadequate inspection constitutes a breach of duty to the owners and occupants and represents a detriment to their welfare.

#### **Commentary:**

The intent of the listing procedure is to determine the minimum installation requirements so as to provide a safe performance of a system which includes the appliance, vent connector and vent system as a whole in the combustion appliance zone or as separate components combined to complete a system. Listed systems should always be installed as per the manufacturer's specifications and the adopted building and mechanical codes. When there is a conflict in codes or manufacturer's requirements, the most restrictive application shall apply. Codes, Standards, and listed instructions may be exceeded unless expressly prohibited by the listing where specific components and techniques are prescribed by the listing. In cases where older existing combustion appliances were converted from their original firing apparatus or fuel to a conversion burner, the inspector should recommend replacement with a new system packaged, tested and listed as a system.

One of the patterns that the board has identified is the lack of inspection to any existing portion of the vent system prior to the installation of a new appliance and/or vent system. All masonry and listed vents systems should be identified and inspected prior to any installation or repair. Sizing of the original system must also be confirmed for proper operation and prevention of deterioration due to condensation of corrosive acids. This inspection should be performed by a qualified inspector professionally trained in this field. The inspector shall document and fully disclose to the owner or occupant all conditions observed and any hazards or potential consequence of continued operation as is.

Additional requirements or measures may be required due to the varying field conditions found at each installation site. The adopted building codes or Authority Having Jurisdiction may increase the minimum requirements determined by the manufacturer but must not reduce the minimum requirements determined by the test results.

The Manufacturers installation instruction must be followed. The Authority Having Jurisdiction and the Product Manufacturer do not have authority to reduce these requirements without voiding the listing of the product(s). Any reduction in the minimum installation requirements is considered an unnecessary risk to the occupants and structure and may reduce the durability and efficiency of the system. Any modification or alteration to the listed system may result in increased temperatures, a change in the heat signature of the appliance, which will invalidate clearances to combustibles, pose a risk of carbon monoxide poisoning or void the listing of the product. This improper action must be disallowed and all modified or altered components must be replaced per manufacturer's listed instructions for safety.

With the knowledge of fire and personal injury investigations to support this opinion, the IAFCI Board has taken a position against this application to prevent fire, personal injury, fatalities and property damage.

Respectfully,  
IAFCI Board of Directors

Last Revised: 12/16/08  
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