

## #4 Reducing clearances with heat shields

### WHAT ARE CLEARANCES?

Clearances represent the minimum distance that a woodburning appliance can be installed from anything that could overheat and potentially burn. Clearances are discussed in WISE fact sheet #3. The closer you are to a fire, the more intense the heat will be. Think about standing in front of a bonfire: if you stand too close, the heat is unbearable. You have to either step back to put distance between yourself and the fire, or put your hands in front of your face to provide a shield. The same principle applies to protecting combustible materials from the heat produced by woodburning appliances. You can either put a generous clearance distance between the appliance and combustibles, or you can install an air-cooled radiation shield or a certified commercial shield to protect the combustibles. The required clearance distances for certified appliances are given on the appliance labels and in the instruction booklets. Uncertified appliances with no shielding require clearances as great as 1200 mm (48 in.) to the front, sides and rear, and can easily occupy more than half the width of a room! Using properly installed heat shields, you can reduce the amount of space your woodburning appliance occupies.

The approach to clearance reduction is the same for certified and uncertified appliances. Before using shielding to reduce clearances for certified appliances, check the label and installation manual for instructions. It's also a good idea to talk to a WETT-certified professional before getting started.

### Don't Live in Fear!

You'd be surprised how many people live in fear of their woodburning appliances. They're afraid to leave the house until the fire has died down completely. These people know instinctively that there's something not quite right about the way their appliance is installed, but they don't do anything to improve it. Instead, they worry - and worry, and worry.

Don't let this happen to you! Have your appliance installation inspected by a WETT certified professional to make sure it's safe. In most cases, the simple addition of proper shielding can ensure worry free enjoyment of your wood heating appliance. Don't be shy - check into shielding today!

### WHAT'S A "COMBUSTIBLE"?

A combustible is anything that will burn, including wallpaper, wood studs, certain types of insulation (e.g., polystyrene), and paneling. Even so-called "fire-resistant" gypsum board (drywall) panels are considered combustible.