



1901 North Moore Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22209
Contact: Sue Kalish
(703) 524-8030
info@nficertified.org
March 2007

PRESS RELEASE

National Fireplace Institute

For Immediate Release

For Safe Fireplace Installation and Service, Homeowners Turn to NFI Certified Specialists

Salt Lake City, Utah – Since 2002, The National Fireplace Institute® (NFI) has offered certification to hearth professionals in recognition that planning and installing fireplaces, hearth stoves, and their venting systems require precise technical knowledge and skill. NFI, conceived and overseen by the HPB Education Foundation (HPBEF), was developed to award, through mastering NFI exams, expert credentials for professionals planning for and installing residential hearth appliances and venting systems.

“Hiring a NFI certified hearth specialist to install both of my gas fireplaces was so important,” said California resident Richard George. “They considered the sizing and placement for optimum operation and warmth, and configured my fireplace for peak performance. This was a major appliance installation that had additional safety issues, and their expertise gave me peace of mind regarding my family’s well-being.”

Public safety is the main objective of certifying hearth industry specialists.

“So much is involved in planning and installing hearth products – from proper floor protection to venting system compatibility and height - as with most disciplines in which precision equals safety and performance, customers require the skills provided by certified specialists,” comments Sue Kalish, executive director of NFI.

NFI conducts nationwide education and testing for hearth system planners and technicians to become certified specialists. Only those who pass a rigorous examination – covering important topics like safety codes, appliance sizing and placement, venting requirements, and installation guidelines – receive NFI Specialist Certification.

Consumers can select from three types of certified specialists, depending upon their needs:

- Gas Specialists are experts in gas fireplaces, stoves and venting systems.

- Woodburning Specialists focus on factory-built fireplaces, woodstoves, and chimneys.
- Pellet Specialists are proficient in pellet stoves, fireplace inserts, and venting.

Hearth professionals who hold all three NFI certifications are now recognized as Master Hearth Professionals earning the added respect from consumers, colleagues, contractors, and building officials for meeting the challenge of attaining all three certifications. NFI posts notification on each Master Hearth Professional's website listing and adds the MHP designation to their NFI ID card.

"NFI Certification indicates professional commitment and training," adds Kalish. "An NFI Certified Specialist pays proper attention to safety and performance when installing a fireplace or hearth appliance and venting system."

Manufacturers of hearth products are rapidly joining the effort to emphasize and ensure the precision and safety of fireplace and hearth products installation. Twenty-eight industry-leading companies have become official NFI Advocates, adhering to guidelines promoting product service and installation from certified hearth specialists.

"As more and more manufacturers support NFI, an industry-wide standardization of superior and safe hearth practices is inevitable," said Kalish.

NFI certification developed five years ago under the auspices of the HPBEF, is a respected program developed and conducted in accordance with national testing standards for technical occupations. For over 20 years, the HPBEF, an independent nonprofit organization, has served the public interest by promoting safety, understanding and responsibility in all facets of the residential fireside.

Since many manufacturers recognize the high standards set forth by NFI and encourage their products be installed and serviced by an NFI Certified Professional, consumers are wise to find the specialist closest to them by visiting www.nficertified.org or calling (703) 524-8030.

End