

NFI Changes in 2019

There are significant changes to the Woodburning, Gas and Pellet National Fireplace Institute (NFI) Certification programs. If you are certified or thinking of becoming certified, **please pay very close attention to the following information**. If you have any questions, please call the NFI office at 703-524-8030 or email us at info@nficertified.org.

Hearth Design Specialist

The new Hearth Design Specialist certification was introduced at HPBExpo 2018 to give the sales/planning personnel the education, credibility and recognition they deserve. The certification material covers the technical information a great sales person needs to know. The Hearth Design Specialist manual and exam will remain a standalone certification. It is NOT affected by the changes to the other three certifications. You simply study from the 1st Edition Hearth Design Specialist Reference Manual. This exam has 100 multiple choice questions and will not be affected by the changes to the other certifications.

Changes to Gas, Pellet and Woodburning Certifications

Since 2002 NFI has certified hearth industry personnel in Gas, Pellet and Woodburning. There is a core body of knowledge that everyone should know regardless of which fuel-type they are certified in. In an effort to reduce the redundancy, we have pulled that core material out and created a Core Reference Manual and exam. To get your first certification you need to pass the Core exam and one of the fuel-type exams (Woodburning, Gas or Pellet). Previously our exams had 100 multiple choice questions. Under the new format, the final version of the Core exam will have about 60 questions and the individual fuel-type exam will have about 40. However, when you want to add a second or third certification, things get easier. Since you have already passed the Core material, all you have to do take the additional fuel-type exam.

NFI Reference Manuals

In preparation for these changes the Woodburning, Gas and Pellet Reference Manuals have been reformatted. There is a new manual for the Core material and a new version of the Woodburning, Gas and Pellet manuals.

Taking the Exam Prior to HPBExpo 2019

If you are taking the current **5th Edition exam** (these are the current 100 question exams), you can study from the 5th Edition Woodburning, Gas or Pellet Reference Manuals. You can also study from the 6th Edition Reference Manuals if you have both the 1st Edition Core Reference Manual AND the 6th Edition Woodburning, Gas or Pellet Reference Manual. Any of the material necessary for the 5th Edition Exam is contained in both the 5th and 6th Edition Reference Manuals.

Taking the Exam at HPBExpo 2019

There are two important things to know if you plan to take a NFI exam at HPBExpo 2019:

1. You will now register for Expo exams on the NFI website, not the HPBExpo website.
2. Exams for the new Core material, as well as the Woodburning, Gas and Pellet exams will be an over-length exam at HPBExpo 2019. An over-length exam is created each time NFI introduces a new exam. After the first group of examinees take the exam, the NFI Exam Writing Committee meets to whittle down the questions to the final number and establish the passing score. Core, Gas, Pellet and Woodburning exams that are taken at HPBExpo 2019 will be scored in mid-April. Pass/fail notifications will be sent out as soon as possible after each Exam Writing Committee meets.

Frequently asked Questions

[I want to get certified for the first time](#)

[I am already currently certified in Woodburning, Gas or Pellet](#)

[What Happens to my expiration dates under the new program?](#)

[What about my Master Hearth Professional \(MHP\) status?](#)

I want to get certified for the first time

1. I plan to take the certification exam September 2018 through February 2019

During the fall of 2018 there are two options for those that want to get their first certification.

a. 5th Edition Woodburning, Gas or Pellet Exams

The current 5th Edition exams will be available until February 28, 2019. Purchase the exam on the NFI website, study and take the exam at either a PSI/LaserGrade test center or through our online exam option.

b. 6th Edition Core, Woodburning, Gas or Pellet Exam.

We start with an “over-length” exam whenever we introduce a new exam. The exam will be 20-30% longer than the final version. After a significant group of people take the over-length exam, the NFI Exam Writing Committee meets with our certification consultant to throw out the questions that didn’t do well and establish the final version of the exam. We will make the over-length exam available September 2018 to February 2019 to those that want to take them online.

- This will apply to the Core, woodburning, Gas and Pellet exams.
- As a special incentive, purchase the appropriate manual from the NFI website and we will give you the online exam for free!
- **However, you will not find out if you passed or not until the Exam Writing Committee meets in in April 2019!**

2. I plan to take the exam at HPBExpo 2019 in Dallas

The Core, Woodburning, Gas and Pellet exams at HPBExpo 2019 will ALL be the over-length version. The Core exam will be about 80 questions. Woodburning, Gas and Pellet will each be about 60 questions. Pass/Fail results from these exams will not be available until after the Exam Writing Committee meets in early April 2019

The Hearth Design Specialist exam will be the normal 100 questions and Pass/Fail results will be available the day after you take the exam.

3. I plan to take the exam after HPBExpo 2019

Once the Exam Writing Committee meets in early April, the over-length Core, Woodburning, Gas and Pellet exams will all be finalized to their proper length. They will all be available at various industry events throughout the summer, at any of the PSI/LaserGrade test centers or through our online exam service.

I am already currently certified in Woodburning, Gas or Pellet

1. Renew by CEUs

There are no changes to the program if you are currently certified and plan to renew your certification by Continuing Education Units (CEUs),

2. Renew by exam

a. Your certification expires between September 2018 and February 2019

The 5th Edition exams will be available until February 28, 2019. Purchase the exam on the NFI website, study and take the exam at either a PSI/LaserGrade test center or through our online exam option.

b. Your certification expires after February 28, 2019

The 6th Edition exams will be available at HPBExpo and beyond. Those that take the exam at Expo will take the over-length exam. Once the Exam Writing Committee meets, the final version of the exams will be available. There is normally a delay before new exams are available at PSI/LaserGrade test centers.

3. You hold a current certification and want to add another certification

You do NOT have to take the Core exam since the exam you took for your current certification essentially contains the Core information. You simply have to take the exam for the fuel-type you want to add.

What Happens to my expiration dates under the new program?

1. One certification

You are not “certified” until you pass both the Core exam and at least one of the fuel-type exams. Expiration dates for those that only hold one certification are based on the date you have successfully passed the Core exam and one of the fuel-type exams.

2. Multiple certifications

Whenever possible it is best to synchronize your expiration dates so all your certifications expire at the same time. The NFI staff works with each person individually to find a date somewhere in the middle of the person’s certification expiration dates.

Those that choose to renew their certifications by exam and do not synchronize their dates will have to watch their expiration dates very carefully. Each certification expires every three years. However, the Core exam will also have to be taken every three years. This will require very close contact with the NFI staff to make sure your certification remains active.

What about my Master Hearth Professional (MHP) status?

The Master Hearth Professional (MHP) is the person that holds a current Woodburning, Gas and Pellet certification. Any material covered in the Hearth Design Specialist certification is also contained in at least one of the three. Therefore you do **not** have to hold a Hearth Design Specialist certification to maintain your MHP status.