

# Getting NFI Certified Fall 2018 – Spring 2019

How do I become certified? The answer is simple – pass the exam! There are certification exams for Woodburning, Gas, Pellet and the new Hearth Design Specialist. Buy the reference manual, study, pass the exam. All of our exams are multiple choice questions. They are not easy. You must study!

A recent industry survey provided some interesting data. About 60% of the manual and exam content for each fuel (Woodburning, Gas and Pellet) is common to all three. Topics like combustion, clearances, safety, etc., are included in all three manuals and exams. We took that “core” knowledge and created a single Core Knowledge manual and exam.

The new Core Knowledge exam is about 60 questions. Each fuel exam (Woodburning, Gas and Pellet) is about 40 questions. To get your first certification, you need to pass the Core Knowledge exam and one of the fuel exams. You’re still answering 100 questions. They’re simply divided between two separate exams. The combined cost of the two exams is the same as you’re now paying. Things get easier once you have one certification. When you want to add a second or third certification, you only take the additional fuel exam (40 questions) since you’ve already passed the core exam. It will save you time and money. The transition to the new exam format should be complete by April 2019.

## Current Exams (If you take the exam prior to April 2019)

We offer four exams, Woodburning, Gas, Pellet and Hearth Design Specialist. Each exam is 100 multiple choice questions. Every exam package includes access to an online review class. You currently have three choices for taking the exam.

1. You can take it at HPBExpo or various industry events throughout the year. Most of those events happen in the spring and early summer as that is when most people have the time to study.
2. You can take the exam at any of the 300+ PSI/LaserGrade test facilities around the country.
3. You can take the exam online if your computer has a web cam and microphone. There is a \$40 surcharge to take the exam online since we have to pay the company that proctors the online exams.

## A Special Deal! Taking the Over-Length Exam prior to March 15, 2019

We are introducing the new exam format for the three fuel type exams. Anytime we introduce a new exam we start out with a longer version (over-length). Although the final core exam will be about 60 questions, we begin with a longer version that includes about 80 questions. After several people take the longer version, our Exam Writing Committee meets with our certification consultant. They look at the statistics for each question. They will throw out the questions that do not perform well and whittle the exam down to the final number of questions. We then use the final version of the exam for the next 3 years. We need as many people as possible to take the over-length version to give us the data we need to make decisions.

We have a very special deal for those that take the over-length exam(s) online. If you purchase the manual, we will give you the exam for free. The new manuals will cost \$70. Buy the manual and we will sign you up for the online version of the exam. There are three things to be aware of:

1. The exams must be taken online. Your computer must have a web cam and microphone.
2. The exams **MUST** be completed by March 15, 2019.
3. You will not know if you passed or not until after the Exam Writing Committee meetings in early April.

## NFI Reference Manuals

In preparation for these changes, we reformatted the Woodburning, Gas, and Pellet manuals. There is a new 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Core Knowledge Reference Manual and a new version of the Woodburning, Gas and Pellet manuals.

## Exams at HPBExpo

There are three important things to know if you plan to take an 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 Knowledge exam, as well as the Woodburning, Gas and Pellet exams will be the longer version at HPBExpo 2019. 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.
3. 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 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Hearth Design Specialist Reference Manual and take the exam with 100 multiple choice questions and will not be affected by the changes to the other certifications.

## Frequently asked Questions

How do I become certified for the first time?

How is my current certification in Woodburning, Gas or Pellet affected by the new program?

What Happens to my expiration dates under the new program?

Does my Master Hearth Professional (MHP) status change under the new program?

### How do I become certified for the first time

#### **1. I plan to take the certification exam September 2018 through March 2019**

Prior to March 2019 there are two options for those that want to get their first certification.

a. 5<sup>th</sup> edition Woodburning, Gas or Pellet Exams

The current 5<sup>th</sup> 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. New Core and 6<sup>th</sup> edition Woodburning, Gas or Pellet Exam.

The over-length exams are available until March 15, 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 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 be the over-length version. 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.

## How is my current certified in Woodburning, Gas or Pellet affected by the new program?

### 1. 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.

### 2. You want to renew your certification 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),

### 3. You want to renew your certification by exam

a. Your certification expires between September 2018 and February 2019

The 5<sup>th</sup> 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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.

## 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.

## Does my Master Hearth Professional (MHP) status change under the new program?

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.