

# Indoor FIREPLACES

While natural gas fireplaces are the safest, most visually appealing way to capture the beauty of a natural fire, it's important to work with a licensed contractor to follow the manufacturer's instructions for installation in accordance with local building codes. For a list of licensed natural gas fireplace contractors in your area, call the Southwest Gas Energy Specialists at **1-800-654-2765** or visit [swgasliving.com](http://swgasliving.com).

This pamphlet provides information about natural gas indoor fireplaces and gas logs. It's not intended to replace the manufacturer's use and care manual, which is the primary source of information for maintenance, cleaning, and safety of your fireplace equipment.



**SOUTHWEST GAS**

Energy Services (11/2012)



**SOUTHWEST GAS**



Natural Gas Fireplaces

clean  
efficient  
dependable



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As you read this guide, you may find that you have additional questions about natural gas fireplace equipment. The Energy Specialists at Southwest Gas can help answer questions and can also refer you to licensed contractors in your area.

Call 1-800-654-2765

or visit  
[swgasliving.com](http://swgasliving.com)  
for more  
information.

## Natural Gas Fireplaces – Clean, Efficient, Dependable

From functional to stunning works of art, natural gas fireplaces capture the comfort and beauty of a fire while enhancing the appearance and value of your home. They're clean-burning, eliminating up to 99% of the pollutants and particles emitted by a wood-burning fireplace.

Spend time relaxing in front of a romantic fire without having to chop, haul, or store any wood. Let flickering flames provide instant ambiance and supplemental heat with the flip of a switch and take comfort knowing that when the fire's out, the messy chore of soot and ash clean-up is gone, too.



**Natural Gas**  
90% efficient



about 10% lost in  
extraction and delivery

**Electricity**  
30% efficient



about 70% lost in  
generation and delivery

While natural gas can be used to produce electricity for your appliances, a large percentage of the energy used for production is lost during the process. With natural gas production, 90% of what originates from the gas well is delivered and ready to fuel your natural gas appliances.

With natural gas the difference is clear. You're choosing to protect the environment by lowering your carbon footprint.

## Types of Fireplaces

**Insert** – Natural gas fireplace inserts are a quick, easy, cost-effective way to transform an inefficient wood-burning fireplace into an efficient heat-producing appliance. They include a set of gas logs built into a steel or cast iron box, with a fan or blower to circulate the heat, improving efficiency and reducing environmental impact. Most often these sealed units have a fixed-glass front contributing to their efficiency, which can be as high as 84% (the efficiency of non-sealed, brick or stone fireplaces range up to 15%.) Along with a multitude of different sizes, natural gas fireplace inserts can be paired with a variety of venting options.

See **Types of Venting** on pages  
7 - 10 for details.



natural  
gas EFFICIENT

**Freestanding Stoves** – As the name says, these types of units are freestanding, not surrounded by a hearth or built into a wall. Designed to look like traditional wood-burning stoves, they can be installed almost anywhere in your home and have flexible venting options. These types of fireplace products are appropriate for small spaces. Freestanding stoves have a lot of surface area which radiates warmth into the room.

A fireplace insert is essentially the same as a freestanding stove except it uses an existing chimney. Often, a flue liner or other chimney modification may be necessary.

**Zero Clearance Fireplaces** – These self-contained fireplace housings, complete with log sets, can be installed with zero-clearance to wall elements, which means that no space is required between the unit and combustible materials, such as wood or wallboard. They're designed to be installed during renovation or new home construction where there's no existing fireplace cavity. They're built-in, usually against a wall and, can be placed on any level of the home.

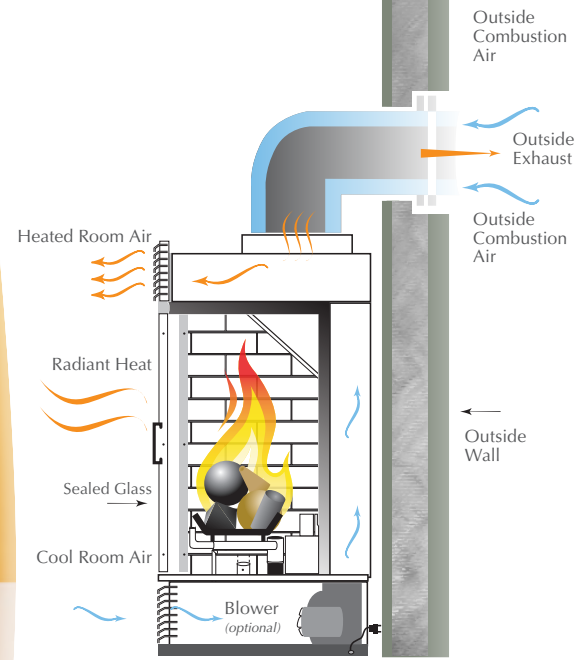
### Log Lighters

Some homes may be equipped with natural gas piping in their wood-burning fireplace. Known as a log lighter, the valve allows for safe control of natural gas to burners in open hearth fireplaces to ignite wood. Once the fire is self-sufficient, the valve is turned off.



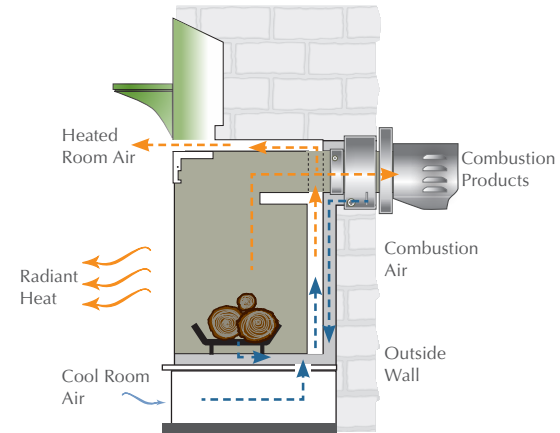
# Types of Venting

**Direct Vent** – A direct vent fireplace has a completely sealed combustion chamber that allows it to vent directly out a side wall or through the ceiling. With this type of venting, outside air is drawn directly into the firebox and the by-products of combustion are then vented back outdoors and kept from entering the room. Direct venting is often used for zero clearance natural gas fireplaces.



Direct Vent

**Power Venting** – Power venting fireplaces have fan-assisted venting. This allows the fireplace venting to extend horizontally through side walls, eliminating the need for a vertical flue or chimney. Like direct vent fireplaces, they're suitable for applications where a vertical flue isn't practical and where there's extra distance between the fireplace and the outside wall.



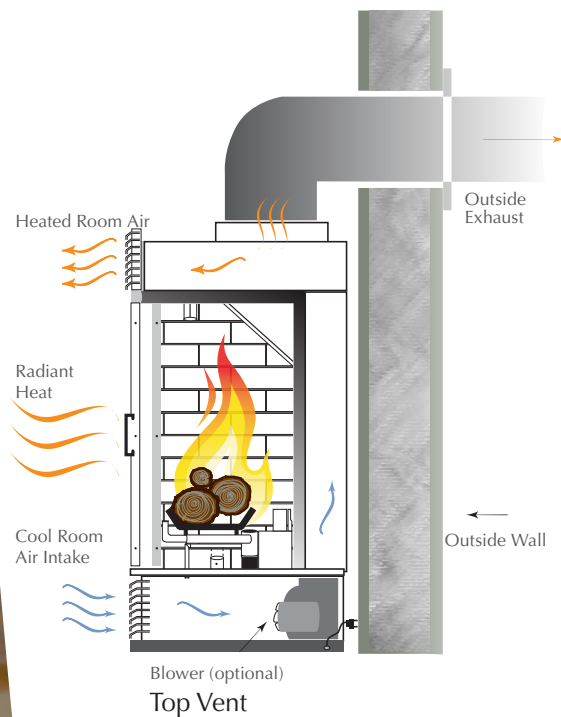
Power Venting





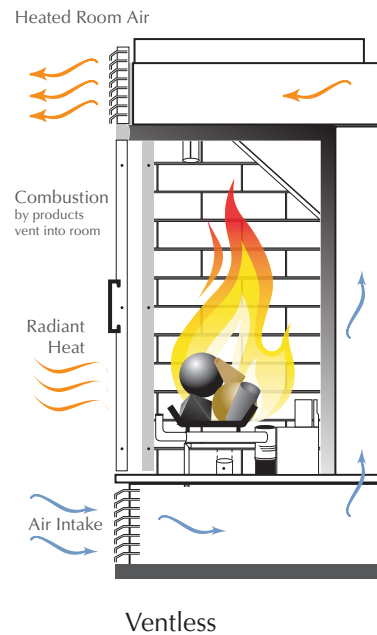
## Natural Draft or Top Vent -

Natural draft, also called top vent, vents through the roof using Class B-vent gas pipe. Natural draft appliances take in combustion air from within the home and vent products of combustion outside the home. With fireplace inserts, the chimney is lined with a certified B-vent which is attached to the insert for venting.



## Vent Free or Ventless -

Vent free fireplaces don't use a chimney or flue pipe. They draw combustion air from inside the home and are designed to burn so efficiently that the need for venting is eliminated. All models feature an Oxygen Depletion Sensor (ODS) for maximum safety. Vent free appliances are not approved in all areas and must be installed per manufacturer's specifications. Please contact your local building agency for details.



# shopping Tips



Natural gas fireplace products are available in a wide variety of sizes and styles to satisfy every taste and budget, from sophisticated high-tech to rustic country charm. They can complement your renovated kitchen, master bedroom or family room. Consider the following when selecting one to fit your needs:

- Features
- Installation requirements and cost
- Location
- Maintenance
- Size
- Style
- Type - *decorative or heater rated*
- Venting

**Valves** – Shut-off valves are installed at natural gas appliances to stop the flow of gas to that individual piece of equipment, if necessary. Fireplace valves include an accompanying key for operation. The valve is usually located on a nearby wall and includes a valve cover with an opening for the key to be inserted.

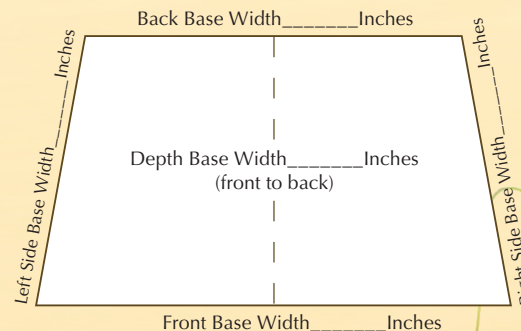
**Keys** – Over time keys may become worn or misplaced. Replacement keys are available for purchase at local home improvement stores, hardware stores and wherever fireplace equipment is sold. Keys are available in various lengths and keyhole shapes.



**Gas Logs** – When buying a set of natural gas logs, keep in mind that they typically range in size from approximately 16 to 36 inches in length. Select a set that is four inches shorter than the width of your fireplace opening. The key factor in selecting the right size log or shape set is to take measurements as noted in the following diagram:

Use this chart for noting the dimensions of your fireplace and take it with you when you shop at your local fireplace retailer.

- Some gas log sets include a sand pan in which the gas burner is buried in a bed of sand.
- Others have an open grate and the burner is located underneath it. Sand and open grates have ceramic logs or the newer contemporary shapes and materials placed above the gas burner. The type of sand used for fireplace equipment is called **silica sand**.
- Wall switches, remote controls and thermostat controls are also available with some units, providing ultimate convenience and ease of use.



# frequently asked Questions

**Q: My fireplace pilot needs to be lit. Can a Southwest Gas technician come to light it?**

A: This service is provided by contractors who are properly licensed to work on natural gas fireplace equipment. For a list of licensed contractors in your area, visit [swgasliving.com](http://swgasliving.com) or call the Southwest Gas Energy Specialists at 1-800-654-2765.

**Q: If the pilot light goes out, is gas still released into the home?**

A: Most natural gas fireplaces come equipped with safety features that turn the gas flow off automatically should the pilot light go out. Like any other appliance, they should be cleaned and serviced regularly, according to manufacturer's recommendations, to ensure that it continues to work properly.

**Q: Can I turn off my pilot light when it's not being used or should it be left on all the time?**

A: For energy efficiency, it's recommended to turn the pilot light off during summer months. Keeping it lit year round however, prevents moisture from entering the firebox and can extend the life of the thermocouple. If assistance is needed for re-lighting the pilot, referrals to licensed contractors are available at [swgasliving.com](http://swgasliving.com) or by calling the Southwest Gas Energy Specialists at 1-800-654-2765.

**Q: How much does it cost to use my fireplace?**

A: There are a few factors to consider when calculating a cost estimate. For example, how many days/hours it will be used and the BTU load of your fireplace equipment. The Southwest Gas Energy Specialists can provide you with an estimate. Contact them at 1-800-654-2765.

**Q: Will I save money if I only use my fireplace during certain times of the day or evening?**

A: No, unlike using your electric appliances, you can use natural gas appliances anytime, day or night, for the same low cost.



**Q: I currently have a wood-burning fireplace and am interested in converting it to natural gas. What type of contractor can help me with an estimate?**

A: Two types of contractors are usually involved with this process: a plumber to run gas piping, and a fireplace contractor for the installation and start up of the equipment. These are in addition to any fireplace dealer/retailer for purchasing the equipment. For additional information and contractor referrals, call our Southwest Gas Energy Specialists at 1-800-654-2765.

**Q: Are there any federal or state incentives for converting to natural gas?**

A: For a listing of information on state, local, utility and federal incentives, visit [dsireusa.org](http://dsireusa.org). Also, for a listing of rebates and promotions offered by manufacturers or retailers in your area, visit [swgasliving.com](http://swgasliving.com).

