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Cleaning the Chimney: Because Santa Doesn't Want His Robes to be Soiled [Linda Wise](#)

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Almost halfway through 2012 and a few of you are probably already thinking about what you're going to get from Santa this year. As part of tradition, he'll pay a visit to your home through the chimney, leave your gifts, snack on milk and cookies, and leave also through the chimney. The least you can do to make him feel at home is to keep his robes clean.

Aside from soiling Santa's red and white garb, all that soot and dirt lining up your chimney may also affect your fireplace experience. The Chimney Safety Institute of America says your chimney can be a potential hazard if you don't have it cleaned at least once a year, usually before Christmas. The fact is simple: dirty chimneys can cause chimney fires. By the time you smell something acrid and notice thick, black smoke, it may be too late.

Soot is already burned fuel, how can it burn again?

Indeed, soot is a product of burnt wood; but soot usually signifies that the fuel didn't burn all the way through. It means there is still some fuel left to burn and they can be dangerous when they gather into a large chunk. Combined with creosote, another byproduct of burnt wood, you have another source of potential fire.

The U.S. Fire Administration estimates that heating fires, such as heat via the fireplace, account for 36 percent of residential fires every year. The group also points to the buildup of soot as the main cause of heating fires, claiming dozens of lives annually. Maintenance is necessary for the chimney to work properly (and also to give Santa a clean pathway).

Traditional brick-and-mortar chimneys require more maintenance than factory-made metal ones because soot tends to stick to brick and mortar more. Some people cover the lining of the chimney with metal sheeting so that soot buildup is less likely to occur. Cleaning a chimney Vancouver homes have requires a professional to do a thorough inspection of every nook and cranny as soot buildup can also compromise the integrity of the chimney structure.

When it gets cold outside, the only thing that should be burning in your home is a clean fireplace and not the entire house itself. A clean chimney Vancouver is the first requirement for the enjoyment of a warm and cozy holiday season. Santa may even decide to pitch in an extra treat for helping him keep his robes clean.

For more information about chimney safety and maintenance, visit the website of the CSIA at [CSIA.org](#). You can also contact contractors of roofing Vancouver homeowners rely on for other chimney related concerns.

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