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July 6, 1990

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The purpose of this letter is to advise architects, contractors, fireplace installers, building code officials, fire prevention officials and insurance industry representatives on the use of chimney surrounds or shrouds with factory-built fireplaces.

Chimney surrounds/shrouds are decorative structures commonly designed by architects and installed around chimney top terminations which are part of factory-built fireplace systems. Chimney surrounds/shrouds are typically made from sheet metal or terra cotta materials, and often supported by plywood structures. Their purpose is aesthetic, not functional.

Chimney surrounds/shrouds are not currently manufactured and sold by fireplace manufacturers, therefore, they have not been submitted by manufacturers with their fireplaces for testing by UL or other testing agencies as part of their factory-built fireplace systems. Consequently, fireplace manufacturers do not warrant their use with their factory-built fireplaces.

While most surrounds/shrouds installed have not been safety tested and are not covered by manufacturers' installation instructions, the fireplace manufacturers are not aware of any consistent pattern of fires resulting from using the estimated millions of chimney surrounds/shrouds currently in place. However, since the manufacturers have not been involved with these devices, they can not attest to their compliance with applicable safety standards. As a result, and in spite of this field experience, the fireplace manufacturers can only endorse the use of listed components, and emphasize the need to adhere to building code safety standards, clearance to combustibles and manufacturers' installation instructions.

Sincerely,

Bill Harris

FMI, Bill Harris

Dan Shimek

Heat-N-Glo, Dan Shimek

Robert Z Burns

Heatilator, Robert Burns

Ray Deasy

Majestic Company, Ray Deasy

Terry Robuck

Marco Mfg, Terry Robuck

Bill Hughey

Martin Industries, Bill Hughey

Warren Hanselman

Superior, Warren Hanselman

E.R. Buford

Textex Products, E.R. Buford