

Fireplace Hazards due to Hurricane Laura

Safety is a large concern with fireplaces after flooding given fire/carbon monoxide risks & potential control system malfunctions after submerged in water

HOUSTON, TX, USA, August 31, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- We believe there is a large number of homeowners who are still uninformed about the fire/carbon monoxide hazards that can arise from using a [fireplace](#) that has been flooded or has been exposed to water, or from damage caused by significant winds. Some of these fireplaces have now been submerged in water multiple times given all the flooding we've had in Texas the last several years and it's becoming even more crucial these fireplaces get flagged as unsafe/not functional and replaced. Very high winds could also cause damage to the [chimney](#) or if you have a metal fireplace/round metal chimney pipe for the pipe to become disconnected and cause a fire/carbon monoxide hazard.

Harky's Chimney & Home Services



At least two of the larger fireplace manufacturers - Hearth & Home Technologies (HHT) and

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With many fireplaces submerged in water due to flooding - it becomes more crucial they are replaced given the fire/carbon monoxide hazards that can arise by using the existing one.”

Todd Harkrider

Innovative Hearth Products (IHP) – recommend homeowners replace their fireplaces and deem the warranties voided if they have been partially or fully exposed to water. Safety is the fireplace manufacturers biggest concern – with a couple larger concerns of water touching the fireplace is resulting holes from rust and the fire/carbon monoxide risks associated with those holes as well as potential control system malfunctions.

Gas log burners/controls present the same issue with the control system being submerged and attempted operation may result in fire or explosion resulting in property

damage, personal injury or loss of life. If fireplace damage was the result of flooding during Hurricane Harvey, Tropical Depression Imelda, Hurricane Laura or another flood, we recommend checking the homeowners insurance policy for any benefits related to flooding.□

Below is a sample list of flooding/chimney water leak symptoms and the importance of having your fireplace and chimney inspected by a chimney professional as opposed to a roofer:

- Rusted Fireplace:** Prefabricated fireplaces (metal fireplaces and round metal chimney pipe) are prone to rust given it's typically just a thin sheet metal frame. Therefore if they've been exposed to a flood or if meaningful water has touched it the likelihood of it rusting increases significantly. These rust spots can easily form holes and become a fire/carbon monoxide hazard and typically should be replaced.
- Control System Malfunctions:** Any electrical wires or control systems exposed to water could become faulty and cause malfunctions. This can lead to fire/carbon monoxide hazards as these malfunctions could lead to the gas remaining open or shorts in the system despite users trying to turn off the system remotely. The control system, and possibly the full fireplace, should be replaced.
- Missing/Damaged Chimney Cap:** A chimney cap works like an umbrella to help block rain from pouring straight down your chimney. A chimney cap is also a great wildlife guard to ensure it keeps birds and animals out of your chimney. Having a proper chimney cap installed is one of the best long term investments for your chimney.
- Cracked Chimney Crowns:** Chimney crowns are the cement part on top of your chimney – it is made to help seal the chimney and divert water from resting or entering your brick from the top of the chimney. Unfortunately, a lot of chimneys were built with an inadequate mortar mix and prone to crack, chip or deteriorate over years of weather abuse. Having a proper chimney crown reduces the weathering effect on the chimney increases its longevity.
- Cracked and Missing Mortar Joints:** Mortar joints are the spaces between bricks that are filled with mortar or grout. Over time, weathering and decay can cause voids in the joints and allow an increased amount of water to enter the chimney area. Tuckpointing or repointing the defective mortar joints will help reduce the amount of water entering your chimney area.
- Cracked or Aged Brick:** Like mortar joints, brick also weathers and decays over time. Especially in Texas where we have a lot of porous brick, it is more prone to absorb water and cause a break down in the brick and mortar particles over time. Having a water repellent, applied by a chimney professional, which allows the brick to continue to breathe should slow down erosion and meaningfully reduce the amount of water entering your chimney area from the aged or cracked brick.
- Faulty Flashing:** Connection between the roof and chimney is typically made with a watertight metal flashing. Sometimes the flashing was installed improperly and other times it becomes worn or corroded over time. Ensuring the flashing area is sound should stop water leaks coming from the flashing area.

If you believe the fireplace has been submerged in water, have chimney water leak issues, or believe your chimney was impacted due to significant winds, give Harky's a call at 855-542-7597 (855-5-HARKYS), or email us at info@harkyschimney.com.

About Harky's Chimney & Home Services, LLC

Harky's Chimney & Home Services, LLC ("Harky's") is a fireplace and chimney service company in Texas that utilizes leading technology. We are an award-winning firm and perform all service with Quality, Precision and Care. We also have some of the longer warranties in our area thanks to our superior work.

Professional designations at the firm include the highly-coveted CSIA-Certified Chimney Sweep and a CSIA-Certified Dryer Exhaust Technician.

The owner is also a Board of Director (Treasurer) for the South Central Hearth, Patio & BBQ Association (SCHPBA) and a member of the National HPBA Governmental Affairs Committee.

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