



RAM FLASH POINTS | Furnace Puff-Backs - January, 2019

A puff-back is the phenomenon that occurs when a furnace or boiler is not properly burning the fuel being supplied to it, allowing gas and vapors to accumulate within the combustion chamber. When the accumulated vapors finally ignite, the puff-back scenario occurs. This often results in unburned fuel and exhaust residue escaping the confines of the furnace and accumulating throughout the dwelling causing cosmetic damage to walls and home furnishings, or, even worse, an explosion or fire. The cleanup of this residue is labor intensive and expensive, not to mention inconvenient for the homeowner.

Puff-backs can occur in both gas and oil-fired units, however, they are most prevalent in oil-fired equipment. Oil-fired equipment requires more intensive upkeep than gas-fired units presenting greater opportunities for improper ignition and burning. Having your heating system cleaned and inspected annually can help you avoid this from happening.

A puff-back generally occurs due to a lack of routine maintenance or age-related wear and tear. The following are examples of what can potentially cause a puff-back:

- A fuel or gas leak at or near the combustion chamber.
- A constricted exhaust or chimney system.
- Cracked heat exchanger tubes.
- Air in the fuel line.
- Damaged or clogged fuel-oil nozzle.
- Damaged or clogged burners.
- Dirty fuel-oil filters.

These examples can all cause misfire within the ignition chamber allowing the excess fuel to accumulate and eventually ignite. Taking necessary precautions and making simple observations can help prevent a puff-back from occurring. To help avoid this, complete the following routinely:

- Check for fuel leaks in or around the combustion chamber.
- Examine and have the chimney system cleaned periodically, or per manufacturers' specifications.
- Examine and change fuel-oil filters as needed per the manufacturers' guidelines.
- Ensure the fuel spray nozzle is clean, distributing fuel evenly, and is free of soot and other debris.
- Examine the heat exchanger tubes for signs of corrosion and replace, if necessary, utilizing the manufacturers' recommendations.
- Although installing a carbon monoxide detector in your home won't prevent a puff-back from occurring, it can serve as an early indicator that a puff-back has occurred as the carbon monoxide levels in your home will rise.

Consumer Product Safety Commission Fire Safety Recalls

Seabreeze International Recalls Bathroom Heaters

The Consumer Product Safety Commission announced the recall of Smart Thermaflo Bathroom Heater Fans with nightlight due to the safety cutoff potentially failing, allowing the heater to rapidly overheat and pose as a fire hazard.

Approximately 2,100 units were sold in-stores and online in the US from Ace Hardware, Amazon, Home Depot, Wayfair, Sharper Image, Brookstone and Air, and Water Inc. from August, 2015 through May, 2017 for approximately \$60.

There has been one report of a unit overheating and catching on fire while turned on, leaving scorch marks on a wall. No injuries have been reported. For more information, please visit: www.seabreeze.ca and click on "SF14TA Recall". You may also contact Customer Service at



Miles Industries Recalls Gas Fireplaces

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has announced the recall of Miles Industries Valor H5 series gas fireplaces as the fireplace trim can leak hot exhaust air, posing a burn hazard.

An estimated 1,000 units were sold in the US with an additional 1,900 units sold in Canada at Northeast Hearth & Home, Sutter Home & Hearth, Wallace's Stove & Fireplace Hearth stores and other various stores nationwide and online from June, 2014 through March, 2018 for roughly \$5,500.

Miles Industries has received one report of mantle charring but no injuries have been reported. Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled fireplace and contact Miles Industries toll-free at



White-Rodgers Recalls Thermostats

The Consumer Product Safety Commission announced the recall of White-Rodgers thermostats as the contact between thermostat wires and household line voltage can damage the thermostat and pose as a fire hazard.

Roughly 135,000 of these thermostats were sold in the US, with an additional 15,000 sold in Canada at Home Depot, Johnstone, and Golden State FC; they were also sold by HVAC distributors nationwide. The units were sold from April, 2014 through December, 2016 ranging from \$90 to \$150 in price.

Eight reports of burn damage to the thermostat have been reported, which also includes minor property damage. Consumers are encouraged to check their thermostats to determine if their unit should be repaired and/or replaced. For unit specifics, please visit www.white-rodgers.com and click on "Emerson Branded Sensi Recall" on the lower left corner of the homepage. You may also contact customer service toll-free at 1-888-847-8742.

