

6-14-10

Greetings Raters-

Just a few notes to be aware of.

Passed on from MOA:

It appears that improperly installed cellulose insulation may be responsible for a recent fire in Anchorage. The insulation in question was in contact with a solid fuel appliance chimney. Apparently, the fire retardant chemicals can break down over time. When improperly installed next to a chimney or flue, the cellulose can begin to char and may even ignite adjacent combustibles. The fire in question occurred in a condo. When other units in a similar building were subsequently inspected, charred cellulose was discovered adjacent to chimneys.

With all of this weatherization work taking place, we have received unconfirmed reports of cellulose being installed in contact with chimneys. If you could please reiterate the necessity to maintain the minimum required clearance to your staff, they could pass it onto raters and contractors. Both the IMC and IFGC require insulation shields to maintain the minimum required chimney/vent clearance. Noncombustible mineral (rock) wool insulation may be installed in direct contact with a chimney or vent and can be used to both insulate the attic and maintain the required clearance.

We have also received reports of GWB ceilings failing under the weight of additional attic insulation. These ceilings were improperly fastened when originally installed. Just something to be aware of.

Ross Noffsinger, P.E.  
Engineering Services Manager/Acting Building Official  
Development Services Department  
Municipality of Anchorage

### Notice concerning water heating efficiencies:

- When a customer has a boiler and a indirect fired water heater, you may use an energy factor for the indirect fired water heater that is 5% lower than the efficiency of the boiler.
- When a customer has a boiler and a tankless coil water heater, you may use an energy factor for the tankless coil that is 10% lower than the efficiency of the boiler.

### Notice concerning wood stove efficiencies:

Prior to AKWarm version 2.0.6.1 the IOR recommended wood stoves that met the EPA's particulate emissions. (*"Replace heating system with EPA certified airtight, 75% AFUE or better, airtight wood stove"*) This is an error in the IOR and has been corrected in AKWarm version 2.0.6.1. These certificates only certify that the stove meets *emissions* standards, not efficiency.

- There is no AFUE for wood stoves.
- There is no standard for testing wood stoves.
- There is no way to know how efficient a stove may burn once the user adjusts the damper.

Stove manufacturers' certificates of compliance with EPA's requirement are not 3<sup>rd</sup> party certified. AHFC policy has been that only 3<sup>rd</sup> party-verified efficiency ratings are valid for energy ratings.

If a wood stove is the primary heat source, and the homeowner purchased a wood stove based on the old IOR recommendation (Prior to 2.0.6.1) of 'EPA certified airtight, 75% AFUE or better, airtight wood stove', you may enter 75% efficient for the wood stove. Since the homeowner bought the stove based on the recommendation in the IOR, AHFC will not penalize the customer for the error in AKWarm. For all ratings generated with AKWarm version 2.0.6.1 or later, use the EPA-listed wood stove efficiencies below:

- non catalytic wood stove efficiency is 63%
- catalytic wood stove efficiency is 72%
- pellet stove efficiency is 78%.

### Notice concerning proper paperwork:

-Please make sure you change the date of an 'as is' rating when you do a post!! Many raters are sending in post ratings with the same date as the 'as is' rating. This creates problems for our processors.

- **Please also check your certificates once printed, to make sure your rater name does not cover the date of the rating!** We receive many ratings where the date in the bottom right corner is not readable because the rater has entered too much information in their name box.

-The attached guidelines are a document that can be given to customers. It helps explain what paperwork to send in for processing. Many homeowners do not send in the proper paperwork with their reimbursement requests. This slows down the processing of their application because we send incomplete packets back to the homeowner. Please consider handing out this document to your customers.

### Notice concerning post ratings:

As a general rule, the rater who performed the 'as is' rating will be dispatched the 'post' rating for their customers. However, there are situations where the post rating will go to someone else. These reasons include, but may not be limited to the following:

1. the homeowner requests a different rater for the post.
2. the rater doesn't respond to the call center's dispatch to do a post
3. the rater is no longer available to do the post.

In the event you traveled to do ratings, and were reimbursed by AHFC for your travel expenses, you are required to return to that location to do the post ratings. But, this situation is also subject to the reasons listed above, most notably, the homeowner requests a different rater.

### Air Source Heat Pumps:

More and more raters are running into Air source heat pumps as a homeowner's primary heat source. Attached is a spreadsheet that allows you to calculate the efficiency of the heat pump based on locations around the state. Just input your heating design temperature for your region into the proper cell at the top of the page. The spreadsheet will calculate afue for you.

Thanks-

James Diemer.