



1901 North Moore Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22209
Contact: Sue Kalish
(703) 524-8030
info@nficertified.org
March 2007

Background **National Fireplace Institute®**

Fireplace Professionals Across the U.S. Certify in Respected Program for the Hearth Industry

In 2001, the HEARTH Education Foundation, a group dedicated to promoting the safety and understanding of hearth fireplace products, formed the National Fireplace Institute® (NFI) as the national certification agency for the industry. The new certification program was designed for those selling and installing gas, pellet, and woodburning products. Its objective is to increase public safety by establishing meaningful credentials for professionals involved in planning and installing residential hearth appliances and venting systems.

In preparation for launching NFI, a comprehensive review process was conducted with the help of industry installers, technical experts, and hearth business owners to determine what industry professionals need to know. As a result of the formal review process, based on national standards for certification agencies, the HEARTH Education Foundation developed reference manuals to study in preparation for taking the certification exam, as well as the tests for gas, woodburning, and pellet certifications.

The reason behind developing NFI was three-fold. First, some jurisdictions across the United States are considering requirements for licensing fireplace installers. Second, the public expects that their fireplace products be installed by a certified professional. Third, a job-analysis survey of hearth professionals clearly demonstrated the need for industry training to more closely match challenges in the field. NFI's certification exams address the concerns in all three instances by testing knowledge required in real-world practice.

-more-

There are three NFI certifications, each valid for three years: NFI Certified Gas Specialist, NFI Certified Woodburning Specialist, and NFI Certified Pellet Specialist. Gas includes all gas hearth appliances and venting systems. Woodburning includes both factory-built fireplaces and the various configurations of wood stoves. And, pellet consists of all pellet stoves and fireplace inserts, as well as venting systems. NFI Certification identifies those individuals who have passed an exam based on the knowledge needed to properly plan and install hearth products and their venting systems. Certification is regarded as an excellent indication of professional training and commitment.

Hearth professionals who hold all three NFI certifications are now recognized as Master Hearth Professionals earning the added respect from consumers, colleagues, contractors, and building officials for meeting the challenge of attaining all three certifications. NFI posts notification on each Master Hearth Professional's website listing and adds the MHP designation to their NFI ID card.

NFI Certified Specialists are required to study constantly updated industry practices and pass a rigorous certification exam to be thoroughly prepared to plan and install hearth products. Those who achieve certification represent the highest standards recognized in the industry. The NFI Certified Specialist designation is aggressively marketed to code and building officials as well as to related fields such as building contractors, fire and safety officials, and, ultimately to the consumer who prefers trained personnel.

Consumers are attracted to professionals who distinguish themselves by demonstrating a concern for safety, professionalism, and competence. Customers looking to buy from or contract professionals who are NFI-certified can visit www.nficertified.org and peruse their listing of certified specialists.

End

National Fireplace Institute®

1901 North Moore Street, Suite 600 · Arlington, VA 22209 · 703-524-8030 · info@nficertified.org

