

# DESIGN

QUARTERLY

## HERITAGE WOODS SECONDARY

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DESIGN NORTHWEST

## HAS LOCATION PREFERENCE OF FIREPLACES CHANGED OVER THE YEARS? CAN YOU PUT A FIREPLACE ANYWHERE?

PE: There are virtually no limits to where a fireplace may appear. Once relegated exclusively to living rooms and family rooms, the gas fireplace is appearing in bedrooms, bathrooms and kitchens like never before.

## IS ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF GAS FIREPLACES A STRONG SELLING POINT TODAY FOR CONSUMERS?

PE: Energy efficiency will continue to be a purchasing decision for a large number of consumers. It is important to remember, however, that efficiency rating and heat output are not necessarily the same thing. Home owners need to consider their room size and shape, and venting requirements before choosing the right fireplace for their home. Selecting a fireplace without considering heat output and venting options may result in a room that quickly becomes too warm to use with the fireplace burning.

Some home owners are more concerned about aesthetics than efficiency. The new decorative direct vent fireplace category



serves those who want more realism and greater design and installation flexibility.

## WHAT DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND SELECTION CRITERIA SHOULD DESIGNERS BE AWARE OF WITH FIREPLACES?

PE: Designers love the fact that fireplaces are finally getting away from the mechanical appliance with the introduction of the clean face fireplace. Gone are the louvers and grills that designers despise.

The traditional split oak log seen throughout North America has been replaced by a variety of log species highlighted by a much brighter flame picture. Fireplaces that are leading the design charge also offer a mix-and-match program for the inside of the fireplace that allows the designer to choose

the logs and firebox liners to complement the style of the room.

Venting needs to be considered when choosing a fireplace, especially for a commercial setting or larger home. Selecting a fireplace with power venting capabilities, for example, will increase the installation flexibility.


## ARE THERE ANY KEY SPECIFICATION ISSUES FOR DESIGNERS?

PE: Designers can insist on a fireplace design that allows them to create the perfect surround, external facing without having to compete with the fireplace hardware.

## WHAT DO YOU FORESEE FOR THE FUTURE OF FIREPLACE DESIGN?

PE: Fireplace control systems can be expected to become more sophisticated, often integrated into whole-home programs.

North American fireplaces, influenced by international designs, will feature materials such as river rock, sand, and tumbled glass as alternatives to the traditional log set in more residential settings.

Generally, the lines between wood and gas fireplaces will blur as gas fireplace technology moves increasingly closer to the look of a real wood-burning hearth. 

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