

A Buyers' Guide to Wood Pellet Stoves

Choosing and installing a wood pellet stove is not such a difficult process. However, there are important decisions to make and a few rules to apply to ensure that your stove will be to your satisfaction and meet your requirements.

It is vital to look for high quality when choosing your wood pellet stove. All products registered by SEI under the Greener Homes Scheme have met minimum quality requirements in terms of performance (minimum 80% efficiency) and eco-friendliness (low emissions).

We advise that you ask your supplier to recommend an installer as reputable suppliers will only deal with experienced qualified installers.

Please visit www.sei.ie/greenerhomes for lists of pellet stoves suppliers and installers. We highly recommend that you shop around in order to get the best product and the best value for your money.



Questions to ask your Supplier and Installer

SEI REIO has put together a list of questions you should ask when engaging suppliers and installers as a prospective buyer. It is in your best interest to make sure you are satisfied that all the questions are answered.

Wood Pellet Stove

- Is the wood pellet stove on SEI's list of registered products? (Remember, if it is not listed you will not receive a grant under the Greener Homes Scheme).
- Is the wood pellet stove certified by a quality label?
- Is the wood pellet stove CE marked?
- What is the efficiency rating of the pellet stove at maximum and minimum heating capacity respectively?
- What is the noise level from the stove during operation?
- Can the stove modulate according to the heat demand?
- What kind of room temperature regulation (thermostat) does the stove have?
- How will the stove interact with other heating systems?
- What kind of safety features does the stove have?
- Does the stove design allow for easy cleaning of the internal flue passages?
- Is the pellet stove going to feed into the central heating system? If yes, how many radiators can it heat? Can it also heat hot water?
- What kind of flame pattern and view does the stove give?

Location

- Is the output adequate for the space it is going to heat?
- Can the stove be located to allow sufficient clearance with combustible surfaces and materials?
- Is there a properly wired outlet for electricity near the stove location?
- Is there enough fresh air supply to the stove for safe and efficient combustion? If not, how can outside air be drawn from an appropriate location?
- Is there provision for appropriate access for maintaining and cleaning the stove?

Chimney or flue pipe

- Is there provision for appropriate access to maintain and clean the flue system?
- Is the minimum clearance between the flue and combustible materials respected?
- Does the existing or proposed flue comply with the stove manufacturer's instructions and with the Irish building regulations?
- Does the flue system recommended take into consideration local factors like altitude, windy conditions, internal negative pressure (in very airtight houses or due to strong fans)?
- Are the joints and seams of the flue pipes properly sealed to avoid exhaust gas leakage into the room?

Installation and commissioning

- Does the supplier offer delivery, installation, commissioning and after sales service?
- Is the floor protected according to the pellet stove manufacturer's instructions?
- What training and experience have the professionals involved with the installation possess?
- How long will the installation take?
- Who cleans up after the installation work?
- What are the procedures and tests carried out when commissioning the system?

Operation and maintenance

- Is full documentation, including the operation manual, provided with the stove?
- Is the fire started manually or automatically?
- What is the pellet storage capacity of the stove and how long can it operate with one refill at nominal heat output?
- What kind of wood pellets (quality and size) have to be used with the stove?
- What is the availability and cost of wood pellets in my area?
- What maintenance tasks have to be performed by a professional and how regularly?
- What is the range of annual costs (fuel and maintenance) under average conditions?
- How often do I have to empty the ash pan?
- Does the dealer have spare parts available?

Costs and payment

- Does the quotation cover all the costs associated with the installation of the stove (stove, flue, installation, delivery, floor protection)?
- What are the financing options and payment terms?

After-sales services

- What is the manufacturers' or suppliers' guarantee for labour and each part of the pellet stove?
- Is an annual service contract available from the supplier?
- How does the dealer provide emergency service work if required?

For further information on renewable energy and energy efficiency, please visit www.sei.ie.

Call 023/42193 for a free information pack on how renewable energy can be applied to your house or business.

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