

Brief History

National Fireplace Institute®

Respected certification program for hearth professionals across the U.S.

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 industry's national certification agency. The 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. The number of NFI specialists, over 2500, grows annually.

In developing 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 that formal review process and based on national standards for certification agencies, the HEARTH Education Foundation developed reference manuals to study in preparation for taking the certification exams, developed by NFI to test knowledge required in real-world practice.

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.

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 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.

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.

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