

Wood stoves becoming a popular alternative to gas

PAXICO (AP) — There's no heat like wood heat.

Talk to people who have wood-burning stoves and that's what you'll hear time and again.

"It's comfortable heat," says Bert Beatty of Paxico. "It warms your bones."

Beatty has a restored freestanding wood stove in the entry hall of her home. She has a propane furnace but estimates the stove provides 80 percent of the home's heating.

Area stove retailers say demand for wood stoves is outpacing supply this winter. It's tempting to install a wood stove so you can dial down the thermostat and the gas bill. But before you channel your inner Daniel Boone, you need to consider the potential drawbacks of round-the-clock wood burning:

— You save a lot of money only if you have access to free wood. If you have to pay for cordwood or pellets for pellet stoves, you won't save much.

— It takes work. Logs or bags of pellets have to be stacked, stored and carried. The fire needs to be monitored and stoked to keep it going.

— It's messy. Dirt and bark drop off logs onto the floor, and you have to empty and dispose of ashes.

— The heat cannot be regulated as evenly as forced-air central heating. Rooms far from the stove will be chilly.

But if you don't mind the extra work, using a wood stove has advantages as well:

— Some people like the fact that bedrooms stay cooler.

— A wood stove is a focal point in a room. Watching flames is relaxing.

— Wood stoves come in many styles, from sleek steel to brightly colored enameled cast iron.

Of course, wood burning doesn't have to be an all-or-nothing proposition. You can keep a fire running only on weekends or during extremely cold periods and rely on gas during the week.

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Leslie Wheeler,
communications director
Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association

becue Association in Arlington, Va. "You can turn down the thermostat and just heat the rooms you're using."

Chimney sweep Jeremy Biswell, owner of Flues Brothers in Overland Park, says a wood stove is always a better choice for heating than an open hearth, even for occasional use.

"Typically in an open fireplace, you're losing 90 percent of the heat up the flue," Biswell said. That translates to 10 percent efficiency. By comparison, he said, older wood stoves are 50 percent to 60 percent efficient, and new ones are 71 percent to 78 percent efficient. "With a wood stove, you're getting more of that heat back into the house."

Wheeler said customers who are interested in convenience tend to choose pellet stoves, which use compressed wood pellets made from sawdust.

Because pellet stoves require electricity, a battery backup is an important feature to look for, said Marge Padgitt, co-owner of Padgitt Chimney Services in Independence, Mo.

With demand for cordwood and pellet stoves up locally as much as four times over last year, many retailers say both types of stoves are on backorder, with delays ranging from two to four months. If you're interested in buying a stove for next winter, don't wait until fall to order, or you may face similar delays.

The first step in buying a stove, Padgitt says, is to have the area where you wish to install it inspected. A certified chimney sweep or stove installer can check for clearances and combustibles and determine what size stove would work best.

For wood stove inserts or hearth stoves to be vented up an existing

masonry chimney, the installer can make sure no other appliances are connected to the same flue and can check the liner system.

For freestanding stoves to be vented through the ceiling, the installer can determine where to run the flue and what parts are required.

Because a wood stove is a major investment, you should buy the best quality you can afford.

"There's a huge difference in the quality of stoves," Padgitt said. "It has to do with thickness and weight of steel. That's where it's worth it to pay more, because a heavier stove will last forever."

Steve Hund, of Paxico, has been restoring vintage wood stoves and bringing them up to working condition for 32 years. He got into the business when the energy crisis of the 1970s caused people to look for alternative heat sources.

Recently he has noticed a change in the type of customers who come to his store, Mill Creek Antiques, to look at his vintage stoves.

"Before, customers wanted stoves that were attractive and rare," Hund said. "Now they want to know how much space they will heat."

Hund's store is filled with a variety of stoves: freestanding models more than 6 feet tall, dainty parlor stoves, hearth stoves and cook stoves. Most sell for \$2,000 to \$2,500. Some of the larger models cost up to \$4,000, while the smallest ones start at \$750.

Restoring the stoves is a painstaking, slow process that often entails having replacement parts or entire fireboxes recast at a foundry. "For me the thrill is to restore it, to make it usable for other people," Hund said.

"After it's restored, the thrill is gone for me. I'm not a collector."

Windmills popping up all over prompts debate on where they belong

STAMFORD, Conn. (AP) — Giant windmills are popping up on farms, scenic mountain ridges, prairie grass and now an Indian reservation, dramatically changing the nation's landscape and spinning a debate about where they belong.

Wind power grew rapidly in 2005, becoming more competitive as natural gas prices jumped and crude oil prices reached record highs. Improved technology, a federal tax credit and pressure on utilities to use clean energy sources helped fuel the growth from coast to coast.

Officials in Atlantic City, N.J., in December dedicated the nation's first coastal wind farm. And last week, Fairfield-based General Electric Co. announced a startup near San Diego of the largest wind power farm on Indian land.

Wind power still makes up less than 1 percent of the nation's electricity, but experts expect wind to generate at least 5 percent by 2020.

"The wind resource in the United States is comparable to the oil resource in Saudi Arabia," said Tom Gray, deputy executive director of the American Wind Energy Association, an industry trade group.

"It's a major strategic national resource we should be making every effort to develop."

While windmills may evoke quaint images of yesteryear, they're sparking growing debate, particularly as the first offshore projects are proposed in popular tourist areas, such as Cape Cod, Long Island, N.Y., and the New Jersey shore.

Critics, including a member of the influential Kennedy family, worry that some projects could harm national treasures.

"All of a sudden you're transferring an asset used by 5 million people into the hands of private industrial speculators," said Robert F. Kennedy Jr., an environmentalist who has objected to the Cape Cod proposal. "If you're giving away public rights, you ought to make sure the public benefits from this transfer, that the costs do not exceed the benefits."

The industry added about 2,500 megawatts of wind power this year, a record 35 percent increase, according to the association. The country's wind capacity is more than 9,200 megawatts in 30 states, enough for 2.4 million average U.S. homes.

In September, a report by the Government Accountability Office, Congress' investigative arm, found that the federal government offers minimal oversight in approving wind power plants. The report urged federal officials to take a more active role in weighing the impact of wind power farms on bird and bat deaths, saying local and state regulators sometimes lack the necessary expertise.

Wind projects have sparked complaints around the country that the windmills cause noise, obstruct scenic views and kill wildlife, including thousands of federally protected birds in California.

In Maryland, state officials have sought to limit 420-foot windmills

atop the state's highest mountain ridge because of concerns about the impact to rare species.

A proposal to build offshore wind turbine towers along the New Jersey shore led to a 15-month moratorium on such projects while a special panel studies the issue.

A wind farm planned in a small town in Vermont has sparked criticism that the nearly 400-foot towers would ruin the rural landscape and hurt tourism.

In Kansas, conservation groups have asked state officials to create guidelines for wind energy developments, citing concerns that more wind farms will harm the last remnants of the nation's prairie grass and prairie chicken populations.

"We feel rather protective of that area and feel it is a real national treasure," said Alan Pollom, Kansas state director of The Nature Conservancy. "If we're really going to capture the benefit of green power, it seems ill considered to pursue it in such a manner that you create off-setting detrimental ecological impacts."

Proponents say bird kills have been minimal at most wind farms, though Gray acknowledged some bird kills. They say the visual impact is far less severe than other forms of energy such as oil drilling.

Wind power helps lower skyrocketing home heating and electric bills by reducing the demand for natural gas and brings new jobs, rural economic development, and tax revenue to cash-strapped states, proponents say.

TV LISTINGS

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WEEKDAYS JANUARY 3 - JANUARY 9

	6 AM	6:30	7 AM	7:30	8 AM	8:30	9 AM	9:30	10 AM	10:30	11 AM	11:30
KLBY/ABC (4) (6)	Good Morning Kansas		Good Morning America				Martha		The View		Millionaire	News
KSNK/NBC (8) (8)	News Cont'd		Today						Live With Regis and Kelly		Paid Program	Paid Program
KBSL/CBS (12) (11)	News Cont'd		News		The Early Show		The 700 Club		The Price Is Right		The Young and the Restless	
K15CG (2)	BBC World	Body Electric	Caillou	Mister Rogers	Beren. Bears	Cliff Pup	Big Big World	Dragon Tales	Sesame Street		Teletubbies	Barney-Friends
ESPN (28)	SportsCenter		SportsCenter		Sports-Center	Varied	SportsCenter		SportsCenter		NFL Live	Varied
USA (37)	Walker, Texas Ranger		JAG		The District		Nash Bridges		Nash Bridges		Coach	Varied
TBS (38)	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Dawson's Creek		Movie				Becker	Becker
WGN (39)	Chang-ing	Believer Voice	Happy Days	Happy Days	Hillbilities	Hillbilities	Rockford Files		Matlock		Magnum, P.I.	
TNT (40)	Angel		NYPD Blue		NYPD Blue		ER		ER		Judging Amy	
DSC (42)	Paid Program	Paid Program	Paid Program	Paid Program	American Chopper		American Chopper		Varied Programs			
A&E (47)	Varied Programs											
HIST (48)	Varied Programs											
NICK (55)	Oddpar-ents	Oddpar-ents	SpongeBob	SpongeBob	Dora the Explorer	Go Diego	Blue's Clues	Backyardigans	Dora the Explorer	Lazy-Town	Max & Ruby	Dora the Explorer
DISN (56)	Break-fast Bear	Higgly-town	Ein-steins	JoJo's Circus	Doodle-bops	Charlie & Lola	The Wiggles	Koala Brothers	Rolie Polie	Doodle-bops	Charlie & Lola	Ein-steins
FAM (58)	Kong-Series	Spider-Man	Power Rangers	Power Rangers	The 700 Club		Living the Life		Gilmore Girls		Step by Step	Full House
HALL (60)	New Morning		The Waltons		The Waltons		Little House on the Prairie		Little House on the Prairie		Diagnosis Murder	

WEEKDAYS JANUARY 3 - JANUARY 9

	12 PM	12:30	1 PM	1:30	2 PM	2:30	3 PM	3:30	4 PM	4:30	5 PM	5:30
KLBY/ABC (4) (6)	All My Children		One Life to Live		General Hospital		Judge-Brown	Judge-Brown	Judge Judy	Judge Judy	News	ABC Wl News
KSNK/NBC (3) (8)	News	Inside Edition	Days of our Lives		Passions		The Insider	Jeopardy!	The Ellen DeGeneres Show		News	NBC News
KBSL/CBS (12) (11)	News	Bold, Beautiful	As the World Turns		Guiding Light		Dr. Phil		Oprah Winfrey		News	CBS News
K15CG (2)	Reading Rainbow	Lions	Varied Programs			Clifford-Red	Cyber-chase	Arthur	Maya & Miguel	Post-cards	Zoom	Business
ESPN (28)	Varied Programs						NFL Live	Rome-Burning	Around the Horn	Interruption	SportsCenter	
USA (37)	Movie		Varied Programs		Movie		Varied Programs					
TBS (38)	Cosby Show	Cosby Show	Steve Harvey	Steve Harvey	Drew Carey	Drew Carey	Yes, Dear	Yes, Dear	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Seinfeld	Seinfeld
WGN (39)	News		Magnum, P.I.		Da Vinci's Inquest		Cosby Show	Cosby Show	Moesha	Moesha	Home Improve.	Home Improve
TNT (40)	Judging Amy		Law & Order		Law & Order		Alias		Charmed		Charmed	
DSC (42)	Varied Programs		The New Detectives		The FBI Files		48 Hours: Hard Evidence		It Takes a Thief		Cash Cab	Cash Cab
A&E (47)	Varied Programs											
HIST (48)	Modern Marvels		Varied Programs									
NICK (55)	Go Diego	Lazy-Town	Rugrats	Teenage Robot	Varied Programs			6teen	SpongeBob	Drake & Josh	Drake & Josh	Danny Phantom
DISN (56)	Higglytown	JoJo's Circus	House of Mouse	Lilo & Stitch	Varied Programs				Kim Possible	That's-Raven	Sister, Sister	Phil of Future
FAM (58)	Family Matters	Family Matters	Boy Mts. World	Boy Mts. World	Full House	Full House	Ground-ed-Life	Ground-ed-Life	Gilmore Girls		7th Heaven	
HALL (60)	Matlock		Matlock		Little House on the Prairie		Little House on the Prairie		M*A*S'H	M*A*S'H	M*A*S'H	M*A*S'H

TUESDAY JANUARY 3

	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
KLBY/ABC 4 (6)	News (CC)	Ent. Tonight	College Football: FedEx Orange Bowl -- Florida State vs. Penn State. Miami: (Live) (CC)						News (CC)	Nightline (CC)	Jimmy Kimmel	
KSNK/NBC 8 (8)	News	Wheel of Fortune	Fear Factor Psycho Fear Factor 1 (CC)	Scrubs (N) (CC)	Scrubs (N) (CC)	Law & Order: SVU	News	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno (CC)		Late Night		
KBSL/CBS 12 (11)	News (CC)	Friends (CC)	NCIS Silver War (iTV) (CC)	NCIS Honor Code (iTV) (CC)	48 Hours Mystery Blood Feud (CC)	News (CC)	Late Show With David Letterman	Late Late				
K15CG (2)	The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer (N)		Nova The Mummy Who Would Be King		Hidden Turkey (CC)		Frontline (CC)		BBC World	Charlie Rose (N) (CC)		
ESPN (28)	College Gameday Pasadena, Calif.		Kickbox- ing	Kickbox- ing	Kickbox- ing	Karate: ISKA	Karate: ISKA	Karate: ISKA	Karate: ISKA	Karate: ISKA	SportsCenter (Live) (CC)	
USA (37)	Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Movie: John Grisham's The Rainmaker *** (1997) A rookie lawyer goes up against a big insurance company. Matt Damon.						Law & Order: SVU	
TBS (38)	Ray- mond	Ray- mond	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	Sex and the City	Sex and the City	Daisy- America	Seinfeld (CC)	Seinfeld (CC)	Movie: City Slickers *** (1991, Comedy) Billy Crystal.		
WGN (39)	America's Funniest Home Videos (CC)		Da Vinci's Inquest We All Fall Down		Da Vinci's Inquest The Stranger Inside		WGN News at Nine (CC)		Sex and the City	Becker (CC)	America's Funnies Home Videos (CC)	
TNT (40)	Law & Order Merger (CC) (DVS)		Law & Order Embedded		Law & Order American Jihad		The Closer About Face (CC)		Cold Case Boy in the Box (CC)		The X-Files 3 (CC)	
DSC (42)	MythBusters Bullet Proof Water (CC)		Most Dangerous Jobs: Dangerously		Dirty Jobs Dirtiest Tools (N)		Dirty Jobs Super Dirty (N)		High Speed Impacts (CC)		Most Dangerous Jobs: Dangerously	
A&E (47)	Cold Case Files (CC)		Rampage Killers: Looking for Signs		Bounty Hunter		Bounty Hunter		Rollergirls The Rookie (CC)		Crossing Jordan Dead Wives Club	
HIST (48)	Modern Marvels Siege Machines		Mail Call (CC)	Mail Call (CC)	Modern Marvels (CC)		Modern Marvels World's Fastest (CC)		Modern Marvels The Autobahn (CC)		Mail Call (CC)	Mail Call (CC)
NICK (55)	Oddpar- ents	Jimmy Neutron	Spon- geBob	Ned's School	Full House	Father- hood	Rose- anne	Rose- anne	Rose- anne	Cosby Show	Fresh Prince	Fresh Prince
DISN (56)	That's- Raven	That's- Raven	Movie: Life-Size ** (2000) A motherless child casts a spell that brings a doll to life.				Ameri- can Drgn		Sister, Sister	That's- Raven	Phil of Future	Kim Possible
FAM (58)	Smallville Visage (CC)		Movie: Agent Cody Banks ** (2003, Adventure) Frankie Muniz, Hilary Duff. (CC)				Whose Line?		Whose Line?		The 700 Club (CC)	
HALL (60)	JAG Hall and Farewell (CC) (DVS)		Walker, Texas Ranger (CC)		Matlock The Fatal Seduction (CC)				M*A*S'H Bug-Out		M*A*S'H (CC)	

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 4

	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM</
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