

Wolf Steel Technical Bulletin

TB-62

November, 2014

To: Napoleon Dealers, Distributors, Installers and Service Persons
Subject: Safety Barriers on Gas Fireplaces

By now, most folks are tired of hearing about this latest requirement scheduled to take effect at the end of this year. In case you missed the multiple articles, all vented gas fireplaces with glass fronts that exceed temperatures of 78° Celsius (172° Fahrenheit) must be equipped with a safety barrier. The safety barrier must prevent direct contact with the glass and must not exceed that same temperature limit.

Related requirements in the test standard for vented gas fireplaces stipulate the barrier cannot collapse or otherwise permit contact with the glass across any part of its surface. It must remain in its intended position. The reason for these requirements is to protect the innocent people in our lives from inadvertently being harmed by the high temperatures of the glass.

Unfortunately, we have received reports of builder's being told competitor's products have safety barriers that are removable and it is up to the homeowner whether or not they remove it after the installation has been completed. They are being led to believe those products with removable safety barriers are preferred since Napoleon models have the safety barriers that are attached and not readily removed. We consider this feature to be a benefit. We do not condone or suggest that safety barriers be removed under any circumstance other than temporarily for service purposes.

Anyone who believes that readily removable safety barriers are a gas fireplace benefit should consider why they are about to be a mandatory requirement. The safety barrier requirement is the result of class action lawsuits made on behalf of victims who had suffered burns from the glass fronts of vented gas fireplaces. The Consumer Product Safety Commission in the US and Health Canada were both lobbied by medical professionals who had treated children for these types of injuries in the past. As government bodies, responsible for the public health and safety, the CPSC and Health Canada were prepared to mandate a resolution when the industry agreed to add the safety barrier requirements to the relative test standards.

Ultimately, anyone promoting the removal of a safety barrier would be considered culpable in a lawsuit involving its removal. In fact, I would challenge anyone making such a statement to back it up in writing. Potentially in a lawsuit, a legal argument could even be made against a builder who chooses to install gas fireplaces with a readily removable safety barrier when options exist to choose one in which the safety barrier is mechanically secured.

It is important we all remember and respect the intent of this requirement. Any suggestion to by-pass this or any other safety device is simply inappropriate.

For more information about this or any other technical questions related to our products, please contact our Customer Solutions Department at: Telephone 1-888-721-8324 or Fax (1-877-329-8324) or email tech@napoleonproducts.com.

