

WHAT MAKES THE BEST WOODSHED?

Its official, the best little woodshed in town belongs to Bronwyn Tuck and Ilona Hart. Their simply built, affordable and artistically arranged wood storage system was the clear winner of Nelson City Council's Best Little Woodshed competition.

The woodshed competition was designed to highlight the importance of having dry wood ready for winter, within easy access of the house. A good woodshed needn't cost a lot and, as we saw in the competition, there are many ways to create a good looking, functional woodshed with whatever you have around.

The judges, Co-chair of the Strategy and Environment Committee, Councillor Brian McGurk, and Eco-adviser Richard Popenhagen, visited a shortlist of the sheds and looked for basic woodshed functions – under cover to keep the rain off, air flow to the sides and an airspace below the woodshed floor. They also gave marks for use of recycled materials, innovation, practicality and aesthetics.

Bronwyn and Ilona's shed was created in their driveway, just a few steps from the front door.

"Our woodshed is a 'No Build' and was \$0 cost as it was made up of materials lying around in the shed leftover from the house build," said Bronwyn.

Second place went to Michael Murphy's very handy woodshed in the southern veranda of his 160 year-old cottage. Third place went to Anna Vesty's dark-stained woodshed with four compartments that maintain airflow through-out the pile, a sloping roof and strong construction.

The prize for innovation went to Susan Drew, who used two bulk plastic containers with the ends cut out and holes drilled for drainage/airflow. Susan also won the People's Choice award with 106 likes on Facebook.



Michael Murphy



Bronwyn Tuck with Councillor Brian McGurk



Anna Vesty with Councillor McGurk



Susan Drew

IT'S TIME TO CHECK YOUR CHIMNEY

So, now you've got a shed full of dry wood – and the nights are drawing in. In a month or so you may want to start lighting the fire on the first chilly nights.

But before you do, it's a good idea to get your flue checked and cleaned by a professional chimney sweep.

Smoke from a woodburner is made up of gas and chemicals released by the wood as it burns. If the fire is too cool, due to damp wood or putting too much wood on the fire at once, residues don't vapourise and can build up on the inside of the chimney. Build-up like this will narrow your flue so it doesn't draw as well, make your wood burner less efficient, and could cause a chimney fire if it does ignite.

To prevent a build-up of residue, always burn dry, untreated wood; light your fire using plenty of kindling and don't damp the fire down after adding new wood until it is well alight. If your chimney is still smoking 15 minutes after lighting the fire or adding new wood, you're burning your hard earned cash and creating unwanted smoke.

A professional chimney sweep will remove the residue safely, and check your woodburner is set up and ready to go for the winter, so you stay warm and don't waste money on firewood that's not burning well.

TOP TIP

The money you spend on a chimney clean will be recovered by having a more efficient woodburner.

5 EASY STEPS TO A SMOKE FREE WOODBURNER

1 Stack dry wood under shelter

2 Have your chimney professionally cleaned

3 Use lots of kindling to light the fire

4 Let the fire get going well before you damp it down

5 Check for smoke after 15 mins to make sure you are burning right.