

EUROPÄISCHE SCHORNSTEINFEGERMEISTER FÖDERATION
FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE DES MAÎTRES RAMONEURS
EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPS





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ESCHFOE

Significance

Since the transition of the European Community into the European Union by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, the European influence has steadily increased at all levels of the societies of the European member states.

Today, national interests are essentially fading as compared to European directives and laws.

Today, chimney sweeping is also regulated primarily at European level and must meet these new requirements.

Founding

With the founding of the European Chimney Sweep Federation (ESCHFOE) in 1954, a strong community of interest in the chimney sweep industry was created, which supports the professionals of the individual member states through job-specific promotion and mutual exchange of experience at European level.

Objectives of ESCHFOE

One of ESCHFOE's objectives is to create a uniform European professional vision and objective as possible, thereby raising the profile of the chimney sweep industry in Europe, underlining its necessity and importance and ensuring that the outcome is rewarded..

International Understanding

ESCHFOE has today become a valuable instrument for the intergovernmental contacts of its affiliates and for the mutual understanding of the countries that belong together.

Topics

The most important topics of ESCHFOE include working practice, technical knowledge and developments, promotion of young talent and training in chimney sweeping as well as fees and remuneration. Recently ESCHFOE is composed of twenty-three full members and one guest member.

The ESCHFOE Members

Full Members:

- Belgium
- Denmark
- Germany
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Great Britain
- Italy
- Croatia
- Luxembourg
- Moldova
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Austria
- Poland
- Romania
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Serbia
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Czech Republic
- Hungary



Guest Member:

- USA

**770 million
inhabitants**

**220 million
supported
households**

**40
associations**

**28.000
businesses**

**66.000
employees**

**14.000
trainees**

The fields of activity of the European Chimney Sweep entity



Operational and fire safety

For centuries, preventive fire safety has been an important concern of all states in Europe to protect the assets of the people and to ensure the safety of life and limb. Out of this concern, the Europe-wide chimney sweep entity developed,

and preventive fire protection still forms the basis of Europe-wide chimney sweep work. Chimney sweeping activities to maintain the operational and fire safety of combustion plants have always been concerned with mini-

mizing property damage and personal injury caused by fires and accidents in connection with fireplaces and ventilation systems.

Fireplace inspection and construction acceptance

Numerous laws, ordinances and technical regulations form the basis for structural fire protection and set minimum requirements for the building, the heating and ventilation technology and the fuel storage to prevent fires. But rules without enforcement are usually ineffective. Through the inspection activities in the context of structural acceptance as well as a recurring fireplace inspection, the chimney sweeps in Europe ensure that the technical, building law and fire protection requirements are actually met and the structural fire protection is ensured.



Combustible residues in exhaust or ventilation systems can lead to damage fires

Sweeping / removal of combustible residues



Cleaning a connecting flue pipe via the cleaning opening in the pipe bend

Every combustion, but also the extract of grease from kitchens or room exhaust air, creates flammable deposits in exhaust and ventilation systems. Without regular removal of these residues by sweeping or cleaning, they may either ignite and cause fire damage, and in the case of a fire, may spread fire to other floors of the building.



Safety inspections technology

Regular inspections of combustion and ventilation systems using visual and measurement techniques are necessary in order to be able to permanently guarantee operational and fire safety.

The chimney sweep has developed effective verification techniques to detect and eliminate hazards of combustion and ventilation systems at an early stage.



*Too small distances to combustible components
(Picture ARGE ESCHFOE)*

These dangers include, among others:

- Subsequent changes that could lead to fire hazards (for example too short distances to combustible components)
- Subsequent changes that hinder the supply of air or the removal of combustion gases
- Subsequent changes that do not comply with structural and fire protection requirements
- Contamination or wear on fireplaces, which can lead to fire hazards or the escape of dangerous carbon monoxide (CO)
- Contamination or occlusion of flue gas systems, which can hinder the free removal of combustion gases and even lead to backflow into the recreation room
- Hazards due to improper fuel storage or storage of flammable or highly flammable materials in the vicinity of fireplaces
- Hazards due to non-functioning safety devices (safety interlocks of fireplaces and air-extracting equipment, combustion air openings, safety temperature limiters, carbon monoxide (CO) monitors, smoke detectors, etc.)



Boiler cleaning before (above) and after (below)



Fire protection outside and inside

In addition to the safety-related inspections of furnaces and ventilation systems, regular inspections inside and outside buildings by chimney sweeps are required in various European member states. These inspections serve in addition to the preventive fire protection also to ensure access for firefighting and emergency vehicles in case of fire.

At the outer inspection chimney sweeps check:

- Access for emergency vehicles
- Fire water supply
- Storage of combustible materials (lumber storage, LPG storage, oil storage, coal storage, straw storage, etc.)
- Assessment of the condition of the building in terms of fire protection (chimney head or roof tops, condition of the roof surface and skylight, fire compartment walls, lightning protection equipment, electrical installations, etc.)

At the inner inspection following points are reviewed:

- Compliance with fire safety requirements within the building
- Storage of flammable materials
- Nature of escape routes
- Compliance with proper fire compartments
- Function of fire doors
- Presence of appropriate and verified extinguishing aids
- Presence of fire safety plan, fire book and required escape route marking
- presence of smoke detectors



(Picture ARGE ESCHFOE)

Fire protection consultations

In addition to the regular sweeping and inspection activities of chimney sweeps, fire protection consultation is also an important element in preventive fire protection. Here chimney sweeps can already participate in the planning phase to avoid sources of danger at an early stage.



Diverse Competence



Fire protection

**Energy consulting
Thermography**



Air quality



**Operational
safety,
checks**



**Environmental
Protection**



Environmental Protection

Against the background that about 40% of the total energy consumption is attributed to the production of heat and hot water, the activities of European chimney sweeps in the field of environmental protection and energy conservation are of particular importance. Also the regularly cleaning of heating appliances, independent of which fuel is used, belongs to the main tasks of the chimney sweep work.

In addition to the monitoring of emissions (dust, carbon mon-

oxide, nitrogen oxides, etc.) at fireplaces on the basis of legal limit values in the field of environmental protection also reviews and activities related to energy efficiency (monitoring of efficiencies, exhaust, radiation and distribution losses, insulation, pump performance and control, hydraulic balancing, energy efficiency labeling, etc.). In addition, the chimney sweep industry in Europe also provides energy saving advice in various forms. This can be done in the planning phase in order to achieve

the most efficient and correctly dimensioned heating system installation. Other useful measures can also result from an energy consultation, as well as saving opportunities can be shown. But during the operational phase, chimney sweeps will also advise on the proper, low-emission and energy-efficient operation of fireplaces and, in the case of solid fuel fireplaces, on the choice of a suitable fuel, its correct storage and proper loading. By consulting the chimney sweep, operator behavior can be sustainably influenced in favor of energy-efficient and low-emission operation of heating systems and fireplaces.





Ventilation and room air quality

Another field of activity of European chimney sweeps concerns indoor air quality. Due to a growing number of built-in ventilation and air conditioning systems, which are increasingly required, especially for energy saving reasons to avoid heat loss due to air exchange, the room air quality is also becoming increasingly important.

Allergies and respiratory diseases can be the result of inadequate indoor air quality. Incorrectly dimensioned ventilation systems or a subsequent increase in building impermeability can also lead to a drop

below necessary air changes and thus to moisture damage and mold fungus formation.

By measuring, checking and cleaning, chimney sweeps can also make a valuable contribution in the field of room air quality. In many European member states (Scandinavia, for example), chimney sweeps have been working in this field for a long time, with the necessary tools and experience to provide for indoor air quality. By this they make a valuable contribution to health protection.



Generalsekretariat / General Secretariat:

ESCHFOE

Westerwaldstraße 6
D-53757 Sankt Augustin
Germany

Phone: +49 (0)22 41 / 34 07-0

Fax: +49 (0)22 41 / 34 07-10

Mail: ziv@schornsteinfeger.de
www.eschfoe.com



Blatt: Apple Stock