



Having ashes to clean is inevitable when you have a wood burning fireplace or wood stove. The type of wood that you burn and the frequency to which you burn will determine just how often you will have to clean out the ashes.

Removing ashes from your fireplace or wood stove regularly is going to help keep allergens in the air to a minimum. It will also decrease the unpleasant odors associated with burning wood.

The most commonly used tool for removing ashes is a shovel but it can only get so much of the ashes. To get into all of the corners and crevices a vacuum is a must! But don't be grabbing your household vacuum or a shop vac to do the job.

The only type of vacuum that should be used to remove ashes is an Ash vacuum. These vacuums are designed specifically for the removal of wood ashes.

Here are a few reasons why an ash [vacuum](#) is chosen over just any ol' vacuum...

### Cannot Handle the Heat



Ashes from burning wood can hold heat for long periods of time, even after the fire has visibly gone out. Glowing hot embers can be hidden in the ashes. When stirred around and exposed to fresh oxygen the embers will become visible.

Household vacuums and shop vacs are not constructed to handle the heat. If a hot ember is sucked up it could damage the plastic components to your vacuum or pose a fire hazard when mixed with the contents in the bag or canister. The filters in regular vacuums are also combustible so a hot ember or warm ashes could

cause them to catch fire as well.

An ash vacuum is designed with a metal canister to withstand the heat of embers being accidentally sucked up. The hoses are also constructed to be heat resistant. However the first rule of thumb when it comes to ashes is to let them cool before sucking them up. You should be able to hold your hand about an inch high over the ashes and count to ten.

## Releases Particles into the Air



The filters are also built differently between an ash vacuum and a household vacuum. Ash dust is different than regular household dust that you find on shelves and such. Ash contains extremely fine particles that will fly right through a regular vacuum's filter. These particles are so fine that they can get into the vacuum's motor causing mechanical problems that can cause it to quit working.

The filters for an ash vacuum are designed to trap the particles in it and keep them from being released into the air that you and your family breathe in. When cleaning out the firebox it is recommended that you wear a safety dust mask and eye wear just as precautionary measures, even when using an ash vacuum. This just keeps you from inhaling any stirred up particles before they get sucked up.

## Unsafe Hoses and Attachments



The attachments that are included with your household vacuum are more likely than not constructed of plastic. Obviously plastic melts when exposed to heat so these will not be ideal to use when cleaning out a fire box. Depending on how long the fire has been out, the fire box could still be warm to the touch and melt the attachments. Hoses have the same problem!

Ash vacuum attachments are designed to withstand the heat and running into potential hot embers. Most ash vacuums only include a crevice tool and a brush tool, so you don't have all of these unnecessary tools just lying around to get lost. The only additional tool you may need for an ash vacuum is a pellet stove hose but you only need this if you are cleaning a pellet stove.

Still have questions about Ash Vacuums or how to clean up your ashes please leave me a message in the comment section. I look forward to hearing from you!

Learn more about removing ashes with an ash vacuum by clicking [here](#).