

OTTAWA FIREPLACES

Costs, Budgeting & ROI

Fireplace and chimney project costs, budgeting guidance, and return on investment in Ottawa

27 Expert Answers from Fireplace IQ

ottawafireplaces.com/construction-brain

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Q1

What's the average delivery and installation surcharge for a heavy soapstone wood stove going upstairs in an Ottawa home?

Delivering and installing a heavy soapstone wood stove to an upper floor in an Ottawa home typically adds \$800 to \$2,000 to your installation cost, depending on the stove's weight, stairway configuration, and access challenges. Most soapstone stoves weigh 400 to 700 pounds, with premium models reaching 800 pounds or more, making them among the heaviest residential heating appliances.

The surcharge breaks down into delivery fees (\$200 to \$500) and additional installation labor (\$600 to \$1,500). Standard ground-floor delivery is usually included in installation quotes, but moving a 600-pound stove up a narrow staircase requires specialized equipment and additional crew members. Ottawa contractors typically charge \$150 to \$300 per flight of stairs for heavy stove moves, plus extra for tight corners, low ceilings, or narrow doorways. Some Victorian and Edwardian homes in the Glebe, Sandy Hill, and Centretown have particularly challenging staircases that can push surcharges toward the higher end of the range.

Crane delivery through a window or balcony is sometimes more cost-effective than stair carrying for upper floors, running \$400 to \$800 depending on access and crane requirements. This option works well for homes with large windows or walkout balconies but requires removing window frames and careful measurement to ensure the stove fits through the opening. Winter installations can complicate crane access due to snow and ice conditions around Ottawa homes.

The installation crew will also need to verify that your upper floor can support the concentrated weight load. Soapstone stoves require proper floor protection and may need additional structural support in older Ottawa homes with traditional joist construction. Factor in potential floor reinforcement costs of \$500 to \$1,500 if your home's structure cannot safely support the stove's weight in the desired location.

When you're ready to get specific quotes for your soapstone stove installation, you can browse WETT-certified wood stove installers through the Ottawa Construction Network directory who have experience with heavy stove installations and can assess your particular access challenges.

Q2

What does it cost to add a heat-recovery ventilator near my Ottawa fireplace to balance indoor air quality?

A heat-recovery ventilator (HRV) installation in Ottawa typically costs \$2,500 to \$4,500 for a whole-house system, though positioning it specifically to work with your fireplace area adds complexity and cost. The total project usually runs \$3,000 to \$6,000 when you factor in the additional ductwork, electrical connections, and strategic placement needed to address fireplace-related air quality concerns.

In Ottawa's extreme climate, HRVs make exceptional sense for homes with fireplaces because our houses are sealed tight against -30 degree winters, creating potential negative pressure issues when fireplaces consume indoor air. A properly sized HRV continuously exchanges stale indoor air with fresh outdoor air while recovering 70 to 85 percent of the heat energy — crucial when outdoor air is brutally cold for five months of the year. This balanced ventilation prevents the negative pressure that can cause backdrafting in fireplaces and ensures adequate fresh air without losing your heating dollars out the window.

The key consideration is system sizing and placement. A whole-house HRV for a typical Ottawa home runs 100 to 200 CFM capacity, costing \$1,200 to \$2,500 for the unit itself. Installation involves running supply and exhaust ducts, electrical connections (requiring an ESA-licensed electrician), and integrating with your existing HVAC system if you have forced-air heating. If you specifically want enhanced ventilation near the fireplace area, expect additional ductwork costs of \$500 to \$1,500 to ensure proper air distribution to that zone.

Important warning: An HRV installation must be properly balanced by an HVAC professional to avoid creating pressure imbalances that could worsen fireplace performance rather than improve it. Incorrectly installed ventilation can actually increase backdrafting risks. Also, HRV maintenance is critical in Ottawa — the heat exchanger core needs regular cleaning, and outdoor intake screens must be kept clear of snow and ice buildup during our long winters.

When you're ready to explore HRV options that work effectively with your fireplace setup, you can browse HVAC contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to find professionals experienced with balanced ventilation in Ottawa's challenging climate.

Q3

What hidden fees should I watch for in Ottawa fireplace installation quotes beyond the unit and labour costs?

Hidden fees in Ottawa fireplace installation quotes can add \$1,500 to \$4,000 or more to your project cost, so understanding what might not be included upfront is crucial for accurate budgeting. The most common surprise costs involve permits, gas line work, electrical connections, structural modifications, and disposal fees that contractors sometimes quote separately or discover during installation.

Gas line extensions are frequently underestimated or excluded entirely from initial quotes. If your desired fireplace location is more than 10 to 15 feet from your existing gas meter or main line, expect \$15 to \$25 per linear foot for new gas line installation, plus \$200 to \$500 for the connection and pressure testing. In Ottawa's older neighborhoods like the Glebe or Westboro, running gas lines through finished basements or around existing utilities can push costs to \$1,200 to \$2,500 for a typical installation.

Permit and inspection fees are often listed as "homeowner responsibility" in quotes, leaving you to navigate the process yourself. City of Ottawa building permits run \$150 to \$400 depending on project scope, TSSA gas permits cost \$50 to \$150, and you may need an ESA electrical permit (\$75 to \$200) if new circuits are required. Factor in another \$200 to \$400 for mandatory inspections by TSSA and potentially ESA officials.

Electrical work catches many homeowners off guard, especially for gas fireplaces that require dedicated circuits for electronic ignition, blower fans, or wall switches. Running a new 15-amp circuit from your panel to the fireplace location typically costs \$300 to \$800, and this work must be performed by an ESA-licensed electrician. Some contractors include basic electrical in their quote, others don't – always clarify.

Chimney and venting modifications can dramatically increase costs, particularly in Ottawa's older homes. Direct-vent gas fireplaces require a hole through an exterior wall and specialized termination hardware (\$200 to \$600). If your chosen location doesn't align with existing framing or requires cutting through stone foundation walls common in older Ottawa homes, add \$500 to \$1,500 for proper installation. Chimney relining for wood-burning inserts – often discovered as necessary only after the old chimney is inspected – runs \$2,000 to \$5,000.

Hearth and floor protection requirements vary by appliance type and may not be included in basic quotes. Non-combustible hearth pads for wood stoves cost \$300 to \$1,200 depending on size and materials. Floor reinforcement for heavy masonry fireplaces or large wood stoves can require structural work costing \$800 to \$3,000 in extreme cases.

Disposal and cleanup fees for removing old appliances, demolition debris, or packaging materials often appear as line items on final invoices. Budget \$200 to \$800 for disposal, more if removing a full masonry fireplace. Some contractors include cleanup, others charge separately.

Seasonal timing premiums affect Ottawa pricing significantly. Installation work scheduled between November and March may carry 10 to 20 percent surcharges due to weather complications and high demand during heating season. Smart homeowners schedule installations in spring or early fall to avoid these premiums.

Always request itemized quotes that specify exactly what's included and what's excluded. Ask specifically about gas line work, electrical requirements, permits, disposal, and any structural modifications that might be discovered during installation. When comparing quotes, ensure you're comparing equivalent scope – the lowest quote often excludes the most items.

If you're ready to get detailed, transparent quotes from experienced fireplace installers who understand Ottawa's unique requirements, you can browse TSSA-licensed gas fitters and WETT-certified professionals through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory.

Q4

What does a multi-fireplace maintenance contract save me per year versus individual service calls for two fireplaces in Ottawa?

A multi-fireplace maintenance contract for two fireplaces in Ottawa typically saves you \$150 to \$300 per year compared to individual service calls, while providing more comprehensive care and priority scheduling during Ottawa's busy pre-winter season. Most Ottawa fireplace service companies offer annual maintenance contracts that cover both gas and wood-burning units at a bundled rate of \$300 to \$500 per year for two fireplaces, compared to \$200 to \$300 per individual service call.

The savings become more significant when you factor in Ottawa's climate demands. With our extreme temperature swings and long heating season running from October through April, fireplaces get heavy use and require more frequent attention than in milder climates. Individual service calls for cleaning, inspection, and tune-ups typically cost \$175 to \$300 per fireplace per visit. If you need pre-season service in fall, mid-season maintenance in January, and post-season inspection in spring, you're looking at \$525 to \$900 per fireplace annually. A maintenance contract covering the same service schedule runs \$400 to \$650 for both units combined.

Beyond direct cost savings, maintenance contracts provide valuable benefits during Ottawa's compressed service season. Contractors prioritize contract customers for scheduling, which means you get your pre-October tune-ups completed before the rush of last-minute calls when the first cold snap hits. Contract customers also receive priority emergency service during winter breakdowns – critical when it's -25 degrees and your primary heating source fails. Many contracts include discounted rates on parts and repairs, extended warranties on service work, and detailed annual reports that help with insurance claims and resale documentation.

The peace of mind factor is substantial in Ottawa's climate. A well-maintained fireplace system is your backup heating source during ice storms and power outages that regularly affect the region. Contract maintenance ensures both units are ready when you need them most, with clean flues, properly calibrated gas valves, and fresh batteries in safety systems.

When you're ready to explore maintenance contract options, you can browse fireplace service companies through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to compare local contractors' annual service packages and pricing.

Q5

How much should I set aside per year for unexpected fireplace and chimney repairs on a 30-year-old Ottawa home?

For a 30-year-old Ottawa home, you should budget \$300 to \$800 annually for unexpected fireplace and chimney repairs, with the understanding that some years may require no repairs while others could demand \$2,000 to \$5,000 for major work. This range accounts for Ottawa's brutal freeze-thaw climate, which accelerates chimney deterioration compared to milder regions.

A 30-year-old home sits in the sweet spot where original fireplace and chimney components are showing their age but haven't yet reached complete replacement territory. The chimney crown and cap have endured three decades of Ottawa winters with temperature swings from -30°C to +35°C, creating inevitable cracking and water infiltration. The mortar joints in your chimney masonry have experienced roughly 150 freeze-thaw cycles, and microscopic cracks are likely allowing water penetration that will worsen each winter.

Common unexpected repairs in this age range include: chimney crown repair or replacement (\$300 to \$1,200), chimney cap replacement due to rust or damage (\$200 to \$600), tuckpointing deteriorated mortar joints (\$500 to \$2,500), chimney flashing repair where the chimney meets the roofline (\$400 to \$1,000), and gas fireplace component replacement such as thermocouples, pilot assemblies, or control valves (\$200 to \$800). More significant surprises can include discovering a cracked clay tile liner during routine cleaning (\$2,000 to \$5,000 for stainless steel relining) or finding structural masonry damage that requires partial chimney rebuilding above the roofline (\$3,000 to \$8,000).

The key to managing these costs is annual inspection and maintenance. A yearly chimney cleaning and inspection by a WETT-certified sweep (\$175 to \$350) often catches problems while they're still minor repairs rather than major emergencies. Similarly, annual gas fireplace servicing by a TSSA-licensed technician (\$150 to \$250) prevents component failures that could leave you without heat during a January cold snap.

Consider setting aside the higher end of the range (\$600 to \$800 annually) if your home has an original masonry chimney that's never been relined, if you burn wood regularly, or if you've noticed minor issues like efflorescence (white staining) on exterior chimney brick or occasional downdrafts. Homes with newer direct-vent gas fireplaces and well-maintained chimneys can budget toward the lower end.

When you do need professional chimney or fireplace work, you can browse experienced contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to compare local specialists who understand the unique challenges of maintaining heating systems in our extreme climate.

Q6

How much does a second-floor gas fireplace with vertical venting through the attic cost to install in Ottawa?

A second-floor gas fireplace with vertical venting through the attic typically costs \$4,500 to \$8,500 installed in Ottawa, with the higher cost reflecting the additional complexity of routing vent pipe through multiple levels and properly sealing roof penetrations. This is roughly \$1,000 to \$2,000 more than a main-floor installation due to the extra venting materials, labour time, and roof work required.

The vertical venting adds several cost factors specific to Ottawa's climate. Your TSSA-licensed gas fitter will need to run the vent pipe through the attic space and create a weatherproof roof penetration that can withstand Ottawa's extreme temperature swings and heavy snow loads. The vent pipe requires proper support brackets every 6 to 8 feet, insulation clearances in the attic, and a high-quality roof flashing system to prevent ice dam formation and water infiltration. In Ottawa's climate, cheap flashing around vent penetrations is a recipe for expensive interior water damage within a few years.

The fireplace unit itself runs \$2,000 to \$4,500 for a quality direct-vent model suitable for a bedroom or family room. Installation labour adds \$1,500 to \$2,500, while the vertical venting materials and roof work contribute another \$1,000 to \$1,500. You'll also need a gas line run to the second floor if one doesn't already exist, which adds \$300 to \$800 depending on the route from your meter or existing gas lines.

Critical considerations for second-floor installations: The vent pipe must maintain proper clearances to combustible materials throughout its run, especially in the attic where insulation and wooden framing are present. The roof penetration requires careful attention to ice and water shield installation around the flashing. Many Ottawa homes have complex rooflines that make vent routing challenging, potentially increasing costs. Always verify that your contractor is TSSA-licensed for gas work and experienced with vertical venting installations.

When you're ready to get quotes for this project, you can browse experienced gas fireplace installers through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory to compare local contractors who specialize in multi-level installations.

How much does a full WETT inspection add to the cost of buying a home with a fireplace in Ottawa?

A WETT inspection itself costs \$250 to \$450 for a Level 1 visual inspection in Ottawa — that is the direct expense you would pay to a WETT-certified chimney sweep or inspector. However, the real cost impact of a WETT inspection when buying a home with a fireplace is often much larger, because the inspection frequently reveals deficiencies that require repair before closing, or that become negotiation points between you and the seller.

Why WETT Inspections Matter in Ottawa Real Estate

In Ottawa's extreme climate, a fireplace or wood stove is a functional heating appliance, not just a decorative feature, and your home insurance company will require a WETT inspection before covering it. If you skip the inspection to save \$300 or \$400 upfront, you will face either an insurance company refusing to insure the fireplace (or the entire home), or finding out too late that the chimney is unsafe and the previous owner knew it. A WETT inspection protects you from inheriting a dangerous or non-functional fireplace system.

The inspection typically uncovers one or more of these common issues in Ottawa homes: deteriorated chimney crowns (\$300 to \$1,200 to repair), cracked or spalling masonry from freeze-thaw damage (\$500 to \$2,500 for tuckpointing or rebuilding), damaged or missing chimney caps (\$200 to \$600 to replace), cracked or damaged clay tile liners that require relining (\$2,000 to \$5,000 for stainless steel relining), creosote buildup requiring professional cleaning (\$175 to \$350), improper clearances to combustibles around the fireplace or chimney, flashing leaks where the chimney meets the roofline, or an appliance (wood stove, insert, or gas fireplace) that is non-compliant with current Ontario Building Code standards or unsafe to operate.

Real Cost Impact on Your Purchase

If the WETT inspection reveals significant deficiencies, you have three options: (1) negotiate with the seller to repair the issues before closing, (2) request a credit toward repairs you will do after closing, or (3) walk away from the purchase if the costs are too high. Many Ottawa homebuyers have discovered fireplaces that looked fine cosmetically but required \$3,000 to \$8,000 in chimney work to become safe and insurable. A Level 1 WETT inspection costs \$250 to \$450 but can save you from discovering a \$5,000 chimney problem after you own the house.

For this reason, the true cost of a WETT inspection is not just the inspection fee — it is the inspection fee plus whatever repairs the inspection reveals are necessary. Budget for the inspection itself as a mandatory pre-purchase expense, and budget for potential chimney or fireplace repairs as a contingency based on the home's age and the chimney's visible condition. Older homes (built before 1980) with masonry chimneys are statistically more

likely to need work, while newer homes with gas fireplaces tend to have fewer structural issues — though gas fireplaces do require TSSA compliance verification.

A Level 2 Inspection May Be Smarter for Older Homes

If you are buying an older Ottawa home with an original masonry chimney, spending the extra \$100 to \$150 to upgrade from a Level 1 (visual only) inspection to a Level 2 (more detailed, including partial internal examination) is often worth it. A Level 2 inspection can detect internal chimney damage — cracked flue tiles, creosote glaze, structural cracks — that a visual-only inspection misses. Level 2 costs \$350 to \$600 in Ottawa and gives you a much clearer picture of what you are inheriting.

The inspection is not an optional expense when buying any home with a fireplace in Ottawa — it is a mandatory part of getting home insurance, and the small upfront cost can prevent you from buying a fireplace system that requires thousands of dollars in repairs or becomes a liability you cannot insure. Get the inspection done before closing, and factor potential chimney repairs into your offer or financing plan.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- 613Bins
- RenoMotion Inc.
- ZinoM Concrete & Landscaping
- Canadian Masonry Services
- Galico Home Comfort Inc.

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Q8

What should I look for when comparing quotes from different fireplace contractors in Ottawa?

When comparing fireplace contractor quotes in Ottawa, focus on **scope of work, materials, licensing credentials, timeline, and warranty**—not just the bottom-line price. A \$3,500 quote and a \$6,000 quote for what sounds like the same project are often describing completely different work, and the cheaper option may leave you with safety issues, code violations, or a fireplace that won't perform properly in Ottawa's extreme climate.

Scope of Work Specificity

The first thing to verify is that all quotes are describing the exact same project. A gas fireplace installation quote should specify: the appliance model and BTU rating, whether it's direct-vent or B-vent, the venting material (double-wall stainless steel for direct-vent, which is standard), chimney relining requirements (if needed), gas line installation or connection details, hearth pad dimensions and material, surround/trim work, and any structural modifications. If one quote says "fireplace installation" and another says "fireplace installation including chimney relining," they are fundamentally different projects with dramatically different costs. Get each contractor to list every component in writing.

Wood stove or fireplace insert quotes should specify: the stove or insert model and efficiency rating (look for EPA-certified units with 70+ percent efficiency), chimney pipe diameter and material (typically 6-inch stainless steel for modern stoves), chimney relining or cleaning requirements, hearth pad size and material, clearance-to-combustible work (framing adjustments if needed), and whether existing dampers or firebox modifications are included. A complete wood stove installation in Ottawa typically runs \$4,500 to \$9,500, but if one quote is \$3,500 and another is \$7,500 for the same stove model, the lower quote may be omitting hearth protection, proper clearances, or chimney work.

Licensing and Certification

This is non-negotiable. For **gas fireplace work**, verify that the contractor employs or subcontracts with a TSSA-licensed gas fitter (G2 or G3 certificate). Ask to see proof of current TSSA licensing—this is not something to take on faith. The quote should confirm that the work will be tagged with a TSSA compliance label upon completion, and you should receive documentation of the license number and certification date. Unlicensed gas work is illegal in Ontario, voids your home insurance, and creates carbon monoxide and explosion risks. If a contractor cannot provide TSSA licensing documentation, move on immediately.

For **wood stove and wood-burning fireplace installations**, confirm that the contractor is WETT-certified. WETT certification is technically voluntary but is effectively mandatory because insurance companies require it for coverage. A WETT-certified installer understands proper chimney sizing, clearances to combustibles, hearth protection, and the entire system approach required in Ontario. Ask for the contractor's WETT certificate number and verify it on the WETT website (wettinc.ca). Many contractors claim WETT knowledge without formal certification—that is not the same as actual WETT certification.

For **chimney work** (cleaning, relining, repair), look for WETT-certified chimney sweeps or technicians. While chimney cleaning is not legally required by the province, insurance companies increasingly demand it, and a WETT-certified sweep understands Ottawa's specific freeze-thaw damage patterns and creosote risks better than a general handyperson.

For **electrical work** associated with fireplace installations, confirm that any hardwired electrical connections will be done by an ESA-licensed electrician. This applies to pellet stove outlets, gas fireplace blower motors, or any permanent wiring.

Materials and Quality Specifications

Compare the specific materials being proposed, especially for critical safety components. For chimney relining, the quote should specify stainless steel (most durable and suitable for all fuel types), aluminum (only for gas, less durable in Ottawa's freeze-thaw cycle), or cast-in-place (highest cost but also strengthens deteriorating masonry). Grade 316 stainless steel is superior to Grade 304 for Ottawa's climate because it resists corrosion better—ask which grade is being specified.

For chimney caps, compare material quality. A basic steel cap is \$200–\$400 installed, while a premium stainless steel or copper cap runs \$400–\$600 and lasts significantly longer in Ottawa's weather. The cap is your chimney's first defence against the freeze-thaw cycle, so this is worth the upgrade.

For hearth pads under wood stoves, ensure the quote specifies non-combustible material (slate, tile, concrete, or engineered hearth board) with proper dimensions per the Ontario Building Code and the appliance manufacturer's specifications. A thin or undersized hearth pad is a fire hazard and may not pass inspection or satisfy insurance requirements.

Permits and Code Compliance

A complete quote should clarify who is responsible for obtaining building permits. In Ottawa, major chimney work, new fireplace installations, and structural modifications typically require City permits. The quote should either state that permits are included in the price or clearly itemize permit costs. If a contractor says "permits aren't needed," that is a red flag—they either don't understand the Ontario Building Code or are willing to cut corners.

Ask whether the contractor will provide a final inspection by a WETT inspector (for wood-burning work) or will ensure compliance with all applicable code sections. Some homeowners arrange their own WETT inspection after installation; others expect the contractor to coordinate it. Clarify this in writing before signing anything.

Timeline and Seasonal Considerations

Ottawa's short construction season matters enormously. Masonry work on chimneys requires temperatures consistently above 5 degrees Celsius for mortar to cure, which limits exterior chimney work to roughly April through November. If you are getting quotes in January for a chimney rebuild, a contractor who says they can start immediately should raise a question—exterior mortar work in sub-zero temperatures will fail. A honest quote will note seasonal timing constraints and may offer a spring or fall start date.

Interior fireplace installations (gas fireplaces, wood stove inserts) can happen year-round, but many contractors are booked solid in October and November when homeowners panic before the first cold snap. If your project is flexible on timing, asking for spring or early fall scheduling often yields faster turnaround and sometimes better pricing.

Warranty and After-Sales Service

Compare warranty terms carefully. Most contractors offer a one-year warranty on labour and typically pass through the manufacturer's warranty on the appliance itself (which is often 5 to 10 years for gas fireplaces and stoves). Ask what the warranty covers—does it include chimney work?

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- 613Bins
- JC Carpentry
- Anchor Home Comfort
- Geerts Roofing Inc
- B.A Gas Works

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Q9

Can I get a discount from Ottawa contractors if I'm installing fireplaces in multiple rooms at once?

Yes, absolutely — installing fireplaces in multiple rooms simultaneously can unlock meaningful discounts from Ottawa contractors, typically ranging from 10 to 20 percent off standard pricing depending on the scope of work, materials, and scheduling. The savings come from reduced mobilization costs, more efficient scheduling, bulk material purchasing, and the contractor's ability to do setup and cleanup once instead of multiple times.

Here's what makes multi-unit installations attractive to Ottawa fireplace professionals. Setting up equipment, running gas lines, coordinating permits, and managing the project overhead costs roughly the same whether you're installing one fireplace or three. When a contractor can bundle the work — say, installing a direct-vent gas fireplace in the main floor living room, a gas insert in the upstairs master bedroom, and a third unit in the basement recreation room — they can amortize those fixed costs across multiple billable hours, which translates into lower

per-unit pricing. Material vendors also offer better pricing on larger orders, and the contractor often passes some of that saving along to you. Additionally, scheduling multiple installations with the same crew during a single project window (rather than three separate site visits months apart) makes the work more predictable and efficient.

The size of your discount depends on several factors. **Type and complexity matter significantly** — three identical direct-vent gas fireplaces will generate more savings than a gas fireplace, a wood stove, and a pellet insert, which require different expertise, materials, and venting approaches. Installing multiple units in a single-family home is simpler than spreading them across separate properties. **Gas line routing** is a big cost variable — if all three fireplaces can share a single main gas line run from the meter, the savings compound. **Scheduling flexibility** is gold for contractors — if you can accommodate their availability during their slower spring or fall season rather than demanding installation during the October-November rush, you'll see better pricing. Contractors are far more willing to discount work they can schedule efficiently into their calendar.

Getting the best discount requires strategic negotiation. Get detailed written quotes from at least three Ottawa fireplace contractors that clearly itemize costs for each unit separately, then for the complete package. Look for contractors with experience doing multi-unit residential installations — some specialize in this work and have systems to make it efficient. Ask explicitly: "What discount can you offer if we commit to all three installations in a single project window?" Request quotes that show the per-unit cost reduction. Many contractors will volunteer a 10 to 15 percent package discount without being asked, but some won't unless you bring it up. Bundling permits also saves money — a single building permit application for multiple fireplaces costs less than separate permits.

One critical consideration: don't sacrifice quality or compliance to chase savings. Each fireplace installation must still meet full Ontario Building Code and TSSA requirements. If a contractor is cutting corners on materials, clearances, venting, or permits to offer an aggressive discount, walk away immediately. You need TSSA documentation for every gas unit and WETT certification for any wood-burning appliance — these are not negotiable, and they protect both your safety and your insurance coverage. A discount that turns into a safety hazard or causes problems with your home insurance is no discount at all.

Timing also affects your leverage. Contractors are most price-competitive during the shoulder seasons (April through May or September through early October) when they're not overwhelmed with emergency chimney repairs and pre-winter service calls. If you can commit to a spring installation timeline rather than demanding work in October or November, you'll see better pricing and faster scheduling. Multiple fireplaces also mean more revenue for the contractor even at a discount, so they're often willing to slot multi-unit projects into premium scheduling windows.

Standard Ottawa pricing for multi-fireplace installations might look like this: three direct-vent gas fireplaces normally priced at \$3,500 to \$7,500 each would typically run \$10,500 to \$22,500 for the full project at standard rates. With a 15 percent multi-unit discount, that same package would run roughly \$8,925 to \$19,125 — a real savings of \$1,575

to \$3,375. If your installations involve different types of units or significant variation in complexity, the discount percentage may be lower, but the absolute savings will still be meaningful.

When you're ready to get competitive quotes from experienced Ottawa fireplace contractors who can handle multiple installations efficiently, you can browse available professionals through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory — that's a good starting point for finding contractors familiar with bundled projects.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Justyn Rook Contracting
- JC Carpentry
- ALTIOR CONSTRUCTION
- M.O.T. CONSTRUCTION INC.
- Rrenovatios

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Are there any Ontario renovation tax credits or rebates that apply to fireplace installations in Ottawa?

Unfortunately, there are no current Ontario or federal tax credits or rebates specifically for fireplace installations, including gas fireplaces, wood stoves, or fireplace inserts. The federal Canada Greener Homes Grant program, which previously offered rebates for home heating upgrades, has been discontinued as of April 2023, and Ontario does not currently maintain a parallel provincial rebate program for fireplace or wood stove installations.

This is a significant shift from earlier years when homeowners could access some incentives for heating system upgrades. The decision reflects a policy shift away from incentivizing individual heating appliances toward broader, whole-home energy efficiency retrofits. For Ottawa homeowners, this means fireplace and wood stove decisions need to be made on the basis of heating value, comfort, and lifestyle benefit rather than tax savings.

That said, there are a few indirect financial considerations worth understanding. If you are installing a wood stove or fireplace insert as a supplemental heating system that genuinely reduces your reliance on your primary furnace during winter months, you may see modest reductions in your natural gas or electric heating bills over time — but these savings accumulate gradually and should not be expected to pay back the installation cost quickly. A modern EPA-certified wood stove burning quality seasoned hardwood can generate substantial heat (up to 60,000 BTU per hour), but you need to factor in the cost of purchasing, seasoning, and storing 4 to 8 cords of firewood annually in Ottawa, which runs \$350 to \$450 per cord delivered.

Some municipalities across Ontario offer property tax reductions for certain home improvements, but Ottawa's tax assessment system does not currently provide credits or exemptions tied to fireplace or wood stove installations. A new fireplace or stove can actually increase your home's assessed value (especially if it adds significant square footage or substantially improves the property's desirability), which could theoretically affect property taxes, but this works in the opposite direction of a credit.

The strongest financial argument for a fireplace in Ottawa today is straightforward: it adds genuine heating capacity, comfort, and quality of life during our brutal winters, it increases the appeal and marketability of your home to future buyers (especially in the \$400,000 to \$800,000 range where fireplaces are highly valued), and a well-maintained wood stove or gas fireplace can serve for 20 to 30 years with proper care. These are lifestyle and real estate benefits rather than immediate tax breaks, but they are real.

If you are making a fireplace decision, focus on choosing the right appliance for your home's layout, your heating needs, and your budget rather than chasing tax credits that no longer exist. When you are ready to move forward with an installation, connecting with an experienced local fireplace contractor through the Ottawa Construction Network directory can help you understand the true cost of ownership and the heating and comfort value you will

actually realize from your specific project.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Apple HVAC and mechanical
- RenoMotion Inc.
- B.A Gas Works
- Joe Imerti Contracting
- Demontigny Carpentry

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Q11

What's the yearly running cost difference between natural gas and propane fireplaces in Ottawa?

Natural gas fireplaces cost significantly less to operate than propane fireplaces in Ottawa — typically **\$400 to \$700 per year less** for a fireplace running 4 to 6 hours daily throughout the heating season. The gap widens substantially during extremely cold winters when usage climbs, potentially reaching \$1,000 or more in annual savings with natural gas.

Why Ottawa's Heating Season Makes This Difference Matter

Ottawa's extreme continental climate means fireplace heating costs accumulate quickly. The city experiences roughly 180 to 200 heating days per year, with temperatures regularly dropping to -20°C or colder. A typical Ottawa household using a gas fireplace for supplemental heat runs it 4 to 8 hours daily from October through April — that's 800 to 1,600 hours of annual operation, far more than homeowners in milder climates.

Natural gas in Ottawa currently costs approximately **\$10 to \$14 per gigajoule (GJ)** through the city's municipal natural gas utility. Propane costs roughly **\$1.90 to \$2.40 per litre**, which translates to approximately **\$18 to \$22 per GJ** — nearly double the per-unit energy cost of natural gas. A typical direct-vent gas fireplace produces about 30,000 to 40,000 BTU per hour and runs at 75 to 85 percent efficiency. Over a full winter season, natural gas users spend roughly \$400 to \$700 less than propane users for equivalent heating output.

The Practical Operating Cost Breakdown

Let's work through realistic Ottawa numbers. A 35,000 BTU direct-vent gas fireplace running 5 hours daily from October through April (210 days) consumes roughly 18 to 20 gigajoules of fuel energy per season. At current Ottawa natural gas rates of approximately \$12 per GJ, annual fuel cost runs **\$216 to \$240**. The same fireplace on propane at \$20 per GJ costs approximately **\$360 to \$400** — a difference of \$140 to \$160 annually just in raw fuel cost.

But actual consumption varies considerably based on thermostat settings, outside temperature, and how frequently the unit runs. Many Ottawa homeowners don't track exact usage — they simply set the fireplace to a comfortable temperature and let it cycle on and off as needed. Over a typical heating season, a medium-use household might see natural gas costs of \$350 to \$550 and propane costs of \$800 to \$1,200 for the same fireplace unit operating identically.

Installation and Infrastructure Costs Reverse the Equation

Here's where the decision becomes more complex. If your home already has a natural gas line running to the location where you want a fireplace, the installation cost difference is negligible. But if you need to run a new gas line to a fireplace location remote from the main gas entry point, that cost can reach **\$500 to \$1,500**. In contrast, propane installations typically require a smaller propane tank (100 to 250 pounds) that can sit outside and connect via a simple propane line — installation often costs \$300 to \$800.

For new construction or homes being built in areas without municipal natural gas service — increasingly common in growth areas like Kanata, Barrhaven, and rural stretches toward Kemptville or Arnprior — propane may actually be the more cost-effective choice upfront, even though long-term operating costs are higher. The break-even point depends entirely on your specific circumstances: if you're installing a fireplace in a home already served by natural gas, natural gas wins decisively on 10-year operating costs. If you're in a rural area without gas service and the fireplace is supplemental (not primary heating), propane might make sense.

Critical Safety and Interchangeability Note

Natural gas and propane fireplaces are not interchangeable. A fireplace designed for one fuel cannot safely burn the other without professional conversion by a TSSA-licensed gas fitter. The burner assembly, orifice sizing, and pressure regulation are engineered differently for each fuel. Attempting to swap fuels or having unlicensed work done can cause incomplete combustion, carbon monoxide production, and explosion hazards. If you are switching fuel types, budget \$300 to \$600 for professional conversion work and always request a TSSA compliance tag after any modification.

Long-Term Perspective for Ottawa Homeowners

For most Ottawa homeowners served by municipal natural gas, a natural gas fireplace is the clear winner on lifetime operating costs. The typical direct-vent gas fireplace installed in a home with existing gas service pays for itself in fuel savings within 3 to 5 years compared to propane operation. Over a 15 to 20 year fireplace lifespan, natural gas savings compound to \$2,000 to \$5,000 or more — money that stays in your pocket during Ottawa's brutal heating seasons.

If you're comparing installation quotes for a new gas fireplace and unsure whether to pursue natural gas or propane, factoring in the full 10-year operating cost difference (not just the appliance price) usually tips the scales toward natural gas in urban Ottawa. Homeowners in rural areas with propane delivery service may find the math tilts differently given upfront infrastructure costs.

If you're ready to move forward with a gas fireplace installation and need a TSSA-licensed gas fitter to handle the connection safely, you can browse experienced fireplace contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to get competitive quotes for your specific situation.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Justyn Rook Contracting
- JC Carpentry
- Geerts Roofing Inc
- Ottawa Demolition Corp.
- Floor-2-Wall Inc

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Q12

How will adding a gas fireplace affect my Hydro Ottawa bill compared to running my furnace more?

A gas fireplace will almost certainly increase your Hydro Ottawa bill compared to running your furnace more, because a fireplace uses natural gas (delivered by Enbridge Gas) while your furnace is typically the most efficient large heating system in your home. However, the overall cost impact depends on several specific factors that are worth understanding before you decide whether a fireplace makes sense for your Ottawa home.

The efficiency comparison: Modern forced-air furnaces in Ottawa homes are typically 90 to 95 percent efficient — meaning nearly all the energy in the natural gas is converted to heat that warms your house. A direct-vent gas fireplace operates at 70 to 85 percent efficiency on average, and critically, it heats only the room where it is located, not your whole home. Your furnace, by contrast, distributes heat throughout the entire house via ductwork. So from a pure BTU-per-dollar perspective, running your furnace is more cost-effective than running a gas fireplace to heat the same amount of space.

Where the fireplace actually saves you money: The real savings potential comes from zone heating — heating only the rooms you are actively using rather than warming the entire house. If you spend winter evenings gathered in your living room around a fireplace, you can lower your furnace thermostat by 2 to 4 degrees Celsius and rely on the fireplace's radiant heat to keep that room comfortable. In Ottawa's extreme climate, where heating costs often run \$180 to \$250 per month during winter, even modest thermostat reductions can offset fireplace operating costs. A typical gas fireplace generates 30,000 to 50,000 BTU per hour and costs roughly \$1.50 to \$3.00 per hour to run at current Ottawa natural gas rates. If lowering your furnace thermostat by 3 degrees reduces furnace runtime by 15 to 20 percent, the savings could partially or completely offset fireplace expenses.

The Hydro Ottawa bill specifically: Your Hydro Ottawa bill includes electricity, not natural gas. A gas fireplace will not directly affect your Hydro bill at all — it runs on natural gas delivered by Enbridge Gas. However, if your fireplace has an electric blower fan (which many do), a remote control, or electronic ignition, those components will draw a small amount of electricity. The blower fan on a gas fireplace typically uses 100 to 400 watts when running, adding roughly \$0.50 to \$1.50 per month to your Hydro bill if the fireplace runs regularly. This is negligible compared to natural gas operating costs.

Important heating realities in Ottawa: Your furnace uses either natural gas or electricity (oil heating is rare in Ottawa now). If you have an electric furnace or electric baseboard heating, running a gas fireplace would actually save you money because natural gas is typically 30 to 40 percent cheaper per unit of heat than electricity in Ontario. If you have a gas furnace, the furnace will remain more efficient overall, but zone heating with a fireplace can still reduce whole-house heating costs during the months you use it — typically October through April in Ottawa.

Long-term cost structure: Gas fireplace installation in Ottawa runs \$3,500 to \$7,500 for a direct-vent unit, plus annual service costs of \$150 to \$250. These upfront and ongoing costs are separate from furnace expenses and should factor into your decision. If you are considering a fireplace purely for cost savings, the math is modest — you might recover \$200 to \$500 annually in reduced furnace runtime, meaning it could take 7 to 15 years to break even on installation costs. Most Ottawa homeowners choose fireplaces for ambiance, comfort, and the psychological warmth of a real fire on a brutal winter night, not purely as a heating investment.

Seasonal considerations: Ottawa's shoulder seasons — October and April — are ideal times to use a gas fireplace without running your furnace. A cozy fireplace can keep a living room warm on a chilly autumn evening when it is 5 degrees outside, allowing you to skip firing up the furnace entirely for a few weeks. This is where fireplaces deliver genuine heating value and cost savings in Ottawa's climate.

The honest answer is that a gas fireplace will increase your overall heating costs if you use it to heat instead of your furnace, but it can reduce costs through strategic zone heating. The real value of a fireplace in Ottawa is the comfort, ambiance, and psychological warmth it provides during the harshest months of the year — the financial case should be a secondary consideration. If you are ready to explore gas fireplace options that make sense for your home and heating situation, you can browse experienced fireplace installers through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to find professionals who understand Ottawa's specific heating challenges and can help you design a system that fits your needs and budget.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Apple HVAC and mechanical
- The Egress Group Inc
- M.O.T. CONSTRUCTION INC.
- Colonnade Security Inc
- Canadian Masonry Services

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How much do Ottawa building permit fees add to the total cost of a new fireplace installation?

Building permit fees for fireplace work in Ottawa typically add \$150 to \$500 to your total project cost, depending on whether your installation triggers a permit requirement and the complexity of the work. However, the real answer is more nuanced because not every fireplace installation requires a permit — it depends on what type of fireplace you're installing and whether structural or chimney work is involved.

When Permits Are Actually Required

The City of Ottawa requires a building permit for new chimney construction, major chimney rebuilds, converting an open masonry fireplace to a sealed insert installation, and any work that involves structural modifications to your home. A straightforward gas fireplace insert slipped into an existing masonry fireplace without chimney work *may* avoid a permit requirement, but you'll need to confirm this with the City of Ottawa Building Code Services (call 3-1-1 or check ottawa.ca). Installing a new wood stove or wood insert with new chimney pipe or chimney relining almost always requires a permit because it involves new structural and venting components. New gas fireplace installations that require gas line extension, venting modifications, or new duct work typically need permits as well.

The confusion arises because permit requirements depend on whether an *existing* chimney can be reused safely or whether *new* structural elements are being added. A licensed gas fitter or WETT-certified installer can usually advise whether your specific project needs a permit — in fact, reputable contractors typically handle permit applications as part of their scope of work and factor the fee into their quote.

Ottawa permit fees themselves run \$150 to \$350 for standard fireplace and chimney work, paid directly to the City of Ottawa. These are relatively modest compared to Greater Toronto Area permit fees, which often exceed \$600 to \$800 for similar work. The real cost multiplier isn't the permit fee itself — it's the compliance work the permit triggers. If a permit requires an engineer's report, additional inspections, or modifications to meet current Building Code standards, those costs can add \$500 to \$2,000 or more to your project. An older chimney that passes visual inspection might fail a formal permit inspection because the chimney crown is deteriorated, the flashing leaks, or the liner is damaged — suddenly you're budgeting for crown repair (\$300 to \$1,200), flashing replacement (\$400 to \$800), or full relining (\$2,000 to \$5,000).

The Strategic Approach

Smart Ottawa homeowners factor permit costs and compliance work into their initial budget estimate by being transparent with contractors about permit requirements *before* getting final quotes. When you reach out to fireplace professionals through the Ottawa Construction Network directory or directly, specify whether your home is in a

heritage district (which may require heritage approval in addition to a building permit) and whether you're converting, adding, or replacing an existing fireplace. A contractor who handles the permit application professionally — submitting plans, scheduling inspections, and ensuring compliance before work begins — adds minimal overhead to your project timeline. A contractor who ignores permits or tries to work around them creates liability for you as the homeowner and risks having the work declared non-compliant during a home inspection or insurance claim.

The Ontario Building Code also specifies that chimney height must follow the 3-2-10 rule: the chimney must extend at least 3 feet above the point where it penetrates the roof and at least 2 feet higher than any structure within 10 feet. If your roof pitch or nearby trees mean your existing chimney is too short, a permit inspector will flag this and require the chimney to be extended — that work alone can cost \$1,500 to \$3,500. Permits exist to catch exactly these issues before they become safety problems.

Bottom line: Budget permit fees as \$150 to \$500 for the fee itself, but recognize that the permit process sometimes uncovers necessary compliance work that adds to your total cost. This is actually a good thing — it means problems are identified and fixed before they become dangerous or create insurance headaches. When you're comparing quotes from fireplace professionals, ask whether the estimate includes permit costs and what contingencies are budgeted if compliance inspections identify additional work. If you're ready to explore your options with experienced installers who understand Ottawa's Building Code requirements, you can browse fireplace contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Apple HVAC and mechanical
- JC Carpentry
- Ottawa Masonry Contractor
- ALTIOR CONSTRUCTION
- Titley Construction

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Q14

What hidden costs should I watch for when getting a fireplace installed in my Ottawa home?

Fireplace installation costs in Ottawa often surprise homeowners because the price tag on the fireplace itself is just the beginning — there are numerous hidden costs that emerge once the project actually starts, and understanding them upfront will help you budget realistically and avoid sticker shock.

The Real Cost Drivers Beyond the Unit Price

The fireplace appliance itself might be \$4,000 for a gas insert or \$3,500 for a wood stove, but that's typically only 40 to 50 percent of your total installed cost. The remaining 50 to 60 percent covers materials and labour that are easy to overlook when you're focused on choosing the unit. Chimney work is almost always more expensive than homeowners expect because the true condition of your existing chimney remains unknown until an inspection happens. If you're installing a gas fireplace in an existing masonry fireplace, you need to know whether that chimney can safely be relined or whether it requires rebuilding — and that discovery often happens mid-project when it's too late to adjust your budget.

Chimney relining is the hidden cost that catches most Ottawa homeowners off guard. If your chimney has deteriorating clay tile liners (common in homes over 30 years old), cracked mortar, or spalling brick damage from our brutal freeze-thaw cycles, a simple gas insert installation can suddenly require a \$2,000 to \$5,000 stainless steel relining job that wasn't in your original quote. Cast-in-place cement relining, which also strengthens deteriorating masonry, runs \$4,000 to \$8,000. Many contractors quote installation assuming an existing liner is usable, then discover during the WETT inspection or initial work that the chimney isn't safe to use — and now you're facing an unexpected \$3,000 to \$5,000 bill before the fireplace can even be installed.

Chimney caps and crowns are another frequent surprise. If your chimney crown (the concrete cap at the very top) is cracked, deteriorated, or missing — which is incredibly common in Ottawa due to freeze-thaw damage — it needs repair or replacement before you install a new appliance. A properly installed chimney cap costs \$200 to \$600, and crown repair runs \$300 to \$1,200, but these are often not included in the initial fireplace installation quote. Since Ottawa's climate makes chimney crown integrity absolutely critical to preventing water infiltration and accelerated deterioration, skipping this work will cost you far more in future repairs.

Gas line installation adds significant cost if your new gas fireplace location is far from your existing gas meter or furnace line. Running a new gas line to a fireplace in a different room or on a different floor can cost \$500 to \$1,500 depending on distance, routing, and whether the contractor needs to drill through walls or joists. If you're converting a wood-burning fireplace to gas, the gas line routing may require costly rework. A TSSA-licensed gas fitter must do all gas work, and their time to run, pressure-test, and tag the line adds labour cost on top of materials.

Electrical work is frequently underestimated. Gas fireplaces with blower fans, electronic ignition systems, or wall switches require dedicated electrical circuits and hardwiring by an ESA-licensed electrician — this typically costs \$400 to \$800 but is often not included in the fireplace quote itself. If you're installing a wood stove or pellet stove, you may need a new dedicated outlet for the stove's blower or controls, which again requires an electrician. These are separate line items from the appliance installation cost.

Hearth pads and floor protection are mandatory under Ontario Building Code and insurance requirements, and they cost more than many homeowners expect. A proper hearth pad for a wood stove must extend at least 18 inches in front of the stove and 12 inches on each side, using non-combustible materials like slate, tile, or concrete — installed cost typically runs \$800 to \$2,500 depending on size and material. A gas fireplace requires less hearth protection, but if your subfloor is wood and needs reinforcement or if you want decorative tile, this becomes a significant line item. Many quotes omit hearth cost or underestimate it.

Structural modifications and framing work can become necessary if your fireplace location requires interior chimney rework, if the fireplace opening needs enlarging, or if exterior venting requires roof penetration for a new vent pipe. These structural items — roof flashing installation, rafter cutting, structural support installation — run \$500 to \$2,000 and are often discovered only once the contractor begins detailed planning. Some installers build this contingency into their quotes; others bill it separately.

Permits and inspections cost money that doesn't always appear in the installer's quote. City of Ottawa building permits for new chimney construction or major modifications typically run \$150 to \$400, depending on the scope. WETT inspections (required for wood-burning appliances and strongly recommended for gas installations) cost \$250 to \$450 for a Level 1 inspection or \$350 to \$600 for a Level 2 inspection if you need detailed evaluation of a questionable chimney. Some contractors include these costs; others bill them separately. Ask upfront whether permits and inspections are included in the quote or are additional charges.

Cleanup and finishing work often gets quoted separately or incompletely. Removing the old fireplace insert, cleaning up masonry debris, patching walls around new vent pipes, and sealing exterior penetrations should all be included, but confirm this in writing. If you're converting from wood to gas, disposal of the old wood stove and chimney pipe may incur additional fees.

Chimney cleaning as a prerequisite happens frequently. If you're installing a new wood stove or wood insert into an existing chimney, the contractor must clean the chimney first — and if it hasn't been swept in years, that cleaning might reveal heavy creosote buildup or obstructions that require additional labour. Budget \$175 to \$350 for a professional sweep, which should be included in the installation package but sometimes appears as a separate charge.

Seasonal timing costs money. If you're booking in late October or November — right before the heating season — you'll pay premium rates because every contractor in Ottawa is suddenly booked and under pressure. Scheduling your installation in spring (April-May) or early fall (August-September) saves 10 to 20 percent compared to last-minute winter bookings.

Warranty and service costs are worth understanding upfront. Most gas fireplace installations include a 1-year labour warranty but not parts warranty — additional extended warranty

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Apple HVAC and mechanical
- The Egress Group Inc
- Floor-2-Wall Inc
- Ottawa Caulking
- Geerts Roofing Inc

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Q15

Is it cheaper to install a fireplace in Ottawa during summer versus waiting until fall when demand picks up?

Yes, you will likely find lower prices and better availability from fireplace contractors during the summer months in Ottawa, though the savings typically range from 5 to 10 percent rather than a dramatic discount. Fall demand does spike sharply in September and October as homeowners panic about the approaching heating season, and contractors respond with longer wait times and premium pricing. Scheduling your installation for June through August is a smart financial move if you have flexibility.

Here's why the seasonal price difference matters in Ottawa specifically. The construction season for exterior chimney work, venting installation, and roof penetrations is compressed to roughly May through October because masonry mortar requires temperatures consistently above 5 degrees Celsius to cure properly. Once mid-October arrives and frost becomes likely, contractors know they have only 4 to 6 weeks left before winter work becomes nearly impossible. This creates intense scheduling pressure in fall — if your installation isn't complete by late October, it gets bumped into spring. Homeowners sense this urgency too, and they call frantically. A typical

fireplace contractor in Ottawa books solid from late August through October, and that scarcity translates directly into higher labor rates and longer wait times.

During summer, contractors have open capacity. A gas fireplace installation that might take 4 to 6 weeks to schedule in October can often be booked within 2 to 3 weeks in July. That scheduling flexibility often includes modest price reductions because contractors prefer steady summer work to the boom-bust cycle. You might save \$300 to \$700 on a typical \$4,500 installation by scheduling in early summer instead of waiting for fall. For larger projects like a full chimney rebuild or relining, the savings could reach \$500 to \$1,500.

There's also a practical advantage to summer installation beyond cost: if any issues arise during the work, the contractor can address them immediately. A chimney cap that needs repositioning, flashing that doesn't quite seal, or a minor structural discovery can be fixed the same week in summer. In fall, contractors are juggling multiple projects and customer callbacks might take weeks. You want your fireplace system completely tested and operational well before the first cold snap in October, not waiting for a contractor to fit you into their schedule in November.

The counterargument is that you won't feel the immediate benefit of a new fireplace until you can actually use it in winter — installing in July means waiting months before you gather around that fire on a -20 degree night. That's a real consideration for the emotional satisfaction of a fireplace, even if it doesn't change the math. Some homeowners also prefer the psychological comfort of having their fireplace "ready to go" as soon as temperatures drop.

If you're planning a gas fireplace installation, the timing advantage is even stronger because summer also means better outdoor gas line installation conditions — ground is easier to excavate, and any exterior runs are simpler to complete without frozen earth and snow cover. For wood stove installation, summer timing is less critical since the chimney venting doesn't require masonry work, but scheduling flexibility and contractor availability still favors earlier booking.

One caveat: if your existing fireplace or chimney has a safety issue, don't wait for summer pricing. A cracked chimney crown, a damper that won't close, or a missing chimney cap should be addressed immediately, regardless of season. Your safety trumps seasonal discounts.

Practical next steps: Contact 3 to 4 fireplace contractors in June or July for written quotes specifying exact scope, materials, timeline, and price. You'll get faster responses and more realistic scheduling windows than fall inquiries. Ask contractors directly whether they offer off-season pricing discounts — some do, others don't, but it's always worth asking. Confirm that all quotes include any necessary permits and timelines for completion well before October.

If you're ready to start reaching out to contractors, you can browse fireplace professionals serving Ottawa and the National Capital Region through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory — you'll find installers with availability and can compare options before committing.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- 613Bins
- JC Carpentry
- Floor-2-Wall Inc
- Innovation Concrete Grind & Polish
- The Next Reno

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Are there financing options available for fireplace installations in Ottawa, like monthly payment plans?

Financing for fireplace installations in Ottawa is available through multiple channels, though options and terms vary significantly depending on the contractor, the total project cost, and your personal credit profile. Many Ottawa fireplace installers offer in-house financing or payment plan arrangements directly, while others partner with third-party lenders, and homeowners can also explore traditional home improvement loans or lines of credit through their banks.

Why financing matters for Ottawa fireplace projects. A complete fireplace installation — whether a gas fireplace, wood stove, or chimney rebuild — typically runs \$4,500 to \$15,000 or more, which is a genuine capital expenditure for most households. Ottawa's extreme winter climate makes fireplaces not just luxury additions but practical heating investments that can reduce reliance on expensive natural gas or electric heating during the coldest months, especially for supplemental heat in a primary living area. Because the payoff (lower heating bills, increased home comfort, improved resale appeal) accrues over years, financing spreads the cost across the period you are actually using and benefiting from the fireplace.

When you contact fireplace contractors in Ottawa for quotes, ask directly about financing options. Many established installers offer 0 percent financing for 12 months (paying off the full balance within the promotional period) or extended payment plans at 5 to 8 percent interest spread over 24 to 60 months. Some contractors partner with companies like Affirm, PayPal Credit, or Lendingclub, which offer consumer-friendly financing with transparent terms you can review before committing. A few larger contractors also work with home improvement financing lenders like Brightside, Home Capital, or even your bank's home improvement line of credit. The key is asking early — financing options should be part of your initial conversation, not an afterthought.

Your personal options outside of contractor financing are equally important to consider. A **home equity line of credit (HELOC)** through your primary bank typically offers the lowest interest rates (currently 6.5 to 7.5 percent in Ottawa's market) if you have built equity in your home, and interest paid on HELOCs used for home improvements may be tax-deductible depending on how the funds are deployed. A **personal line of credit** from your bank runs slightly higher (7 to 8 percent) but requires no home equity and no new appraisal. A **home improvement loan** (a personal loan specifically marketed for renovations) typically costs 7.5 to 10 percent but offers predictable fixed payments and is often available even with moderate credit scores. Some homeowners also use a **low-interest credit card** or balance transfer card if the total project cost is under \$5,000 and you can pay it off within the promotional period.

What you should avoid is high-interest financing or predatory lending. Payday loans, bad-credit personal loans charging 15 to 29 percent interest, and rent-to-own financing arrangements should be your last resorts — they often cost more in total interest than the original fireplace installation. Always compare the effective interest rate (APR) and total cost of borrowed money across options, not just the monthly payment.

A practical strategy for Ottawa fireplace projects is to break the work into phases. For example, you might install a direct-vent gas fireplace in spring (typically \$3,500 to \$7,500) financed over 24 months, then schedule a chimney relining or hearth renovation for the following year. This spreads both the financial load and the seasonal work across a longer timeline. Spring and early fall are ideal for fireplace work in Ottawa since masonry and exterior work require consistent temperatures above 5 degrees Celsius, so contractors may offer better pricing or availability if you schedule during those seasons rather than the frantic pre-winter rush.

Be aware that financing terms can vary based on the contractor's overhead, the specific work involved, and current lending market conditions. Always request written quotes that clearly itemize the total project cost, note which portions qualify for financing, specify the interest rate and payment terms, detail any early-payoff penalties, and confirm what happens if the contractor goes out of business or the work is not completed as promised. Some contractors build financing into their pricing (meaning a financed purchase costs more than paying in full upfront), while others offer the same price regardless of payment method — ask directly.

When you are ready to get quotes from Ottawa fireplace installers, you can browse contractors through the **Ottawa Construction Network directory** at justynrookcontracts.com/directory, which makes it easy to compare multiple installers and ask about their specific financing options as you request estimates. The directory helps you reach several contractors quickly so you can compare not just pricing but also their financing terms, contractor reputation, and project timelines — all critical factors for a project this size.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Luxe Painting and Renovations
- RenoMotion Inc.
- Best Hand2Hand moving company
- Dump n Dash Hauling
- The Next Reno

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What's a realistic budget for converting an open masonry fireplace to a sealed EPA-certified wood insert in Ottawa?

A realistic budget for converting an open masonry fireplace to a sealed EPA-certified wood insert in Ottawa runs **\$3,500 to \$7,000 installed**, with most homeowners spending around \$5,000 to \$6,000 for a quality system in the Ottawa area.

Here's how that breaks down: the wood insert itself (a modern EPA-certified unit from brands like Osburn, Napoleon, or Vermont Casting) typically costs \$1,800 to \$3,500. Installation labour, including proper fitment into your fireplace opening, runs \$800 to \$1,500. You'll need a chimney liner (almost always stainless steel for wood inserts) to safely contain combustion gases and creosote, which adds \$2,000 to \$4,500 depending on your chimney height and condition. A proper hearth pad or fireplace base extension (required by code if your current hearth doesn't extend far enough from the insert) costs \$300 to \$800. Permit fees from the City of Ottawa typically run \$150 to \$350 for a fireplace modification, and you should budget \$250 to \$450 for a WETT Level 1 inspection to ensure everything is safe and insurable.

The critical question in Ottawa is always **chimney condition**. If your existing masonry chimney has a deteriorated or blocked clay tile liner — which is common in older Ottawa homes due to our brutal freeze-thaw cycles — the stainless steel relining becomes essential and is the largest cost variable. A chimney in poor condition might need partial tuckpointing (\$500 to \$2,500) or even a crown repair (\$300 to \$1,200) before the insert can be safely installed. If your chimney is structurally sound and the liner can be confirmed clear and passable, you're at the lower end of the range. If hidden damage exists, costs can push toward \$8,000 or beyond.

Ottawa-specific factors make this conversion particularly practical. An open masonry fireplace wastes 70 to 80 percent of its heat up the chimney — essentially paying to heat the outdoors on a -25 degree January night. A modern EPA-certified wood insert improves efficiency to 70 to 80 percent, meaning the same cord of wood produces 8 to 10 times more usable heat in your home. Over Ottawa's seven-month heating season, this translates to real money saved and genuine supplemental heating capacity, especially valuable during ice storms when power outages last days. The sealed design also eliminates the cold downdrafts that open fireplaces create — that unpleasant feeling of cold air being drawn down the chimney and across your living room.

Important considerations: Wood inserts require annual chimney cleaning and inspection by a WETT-certified sweep (budget \$200 to \$350 yearly) because creosote accumulation is a serious concern in Ottawa's climate where homeowners burn wood for five to seven months straight. Your home insurance company will very likely require a WETT Level 1 inspection before they will cover a wood-burning appliance — get this done after installation and keep the certificate with your home records. You'll also need to arrange reliable firewood supply: figure on 3 to 5

cords of properly seasoned hardwood per heating season in Ottawa (delivered wood costs \$350 to \$450 per cord), and wood needs 12 to 18 months of outdoor seasoning before it's ready to burn efficiently.

The conversion is almost always worth the investment if your open fireplace is rarely used (because you get efficient heat now) or if it's a primary or supplemental heating source (because you'll save significantly on fuel costs over five to ten years). However, if you love the aesthetic of a fully open fireplace and rarely need the heat, a gas insert or even a simple electric unit might better suit your needs without the maintenance and annual cleaning requirements.

When you're ready to explore options, you can browse experienced wood stove and fireplace insert installers through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to compare contractors who understand Ottawa's specific climate challenges and chimney conditions.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Apple HVAC and mechanical
- The Egress Group Inc
- Home Front Services
- ZinoM Concrete & Landscaping
- BFI Renovations

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Q18

How much more does running a natural gas line for a new fireplace add to the total project cost in Ottawa?

Running a new natural gas line to a fireplace location typically adds **\$500 to \$1,500** to your total project cost in Ottawa, depending on the distance from the existing gas meter, the complexity of the routing, and whether the line runs inside walls or through finished spaces.

This is an important cost to factor into your fireplace budget upfront, because it is easy to underestimate. If your gas meter is on the opposite side of your house from your planned fireplace location, or if the line needs to run through finished basement areas or crawl spaces with obstacles, you are looking at the higher end of that range —

sometimes even exceeding \$1,500. Conversely, if you are placing a gas fireplace in a basement near the gas meter or in a room adjacent to an existing gas appliance like a furnace, the run is short and you may pay closer to \$500.

The work must be done by a **TSSA-licensed gas fitter** — this is not negotiable under Ontario law, and it is one of the few aspects of your fireplace project where you absolutely cannot cut corners or use an unlicensed tradesperson. The gas fitter handles all material and labour for the new line, including the proper sizing of the pipe (typically 1/2-inch copper or black iron for a fireplace), pressure testing, and tagging the system for compliance. After the line is installed and tested, your fireplace installer will connect the appliance to the line.

In Ottawa, this gas line work is often bundled into the overall fireplace installation quote, so always ask your contractor whether the gas line is included in the stated price or quoted separately. A typical direct-vent gas fireplace installation quote of \$3,500 to \$7,500 may or may not include a new gas line — some contractors assume you have an accessible existing line, while others include the line work in their base price. Clarify this explicitly when you get quotes, because discovering a \$1,000+ surprise after signing a contract is frustrating and common.

One practical consideration specific to Ottawa: if you are renovating your home in spring or early summer, scheduling the gas line installation while other trades are already working inside walls is far more efficient and less expensive than running a line through finished spaces later. The gas fitter can coordinate with your electrician and general contractor to have the line stubbed in before drywall closes up. If you are adding a fireplace to an existing finished space, the line will run visibly along baseboards or through the attic, which costs slightly less but is less attractive.

When you are ready to get quotes on your fireplace project, always ask three key questions: (1) Does the estimate include a new gas line, or is that a separate cost? (2) How long is the line run, and has the fitter assessed the exact routing? (3) Is the TSSA compliance tag and inspection included? A professional TSSA-licensed gas fitter will walk your home and give you a specific quote for the line work before committing to the overall job.

If you are exploring fireplace options and need to find a licensed gas fitter who can assess your specific situation and give you an accurate quote, you can browse fireplace contractors and gas fitters through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to compare local professionals who understand Ottawa homes and can explain the routing and costs for your particular situation.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Homeupgraders
- JC Carpentry

- Humble Homes - property maintenance
- Capital City Drywall
- TIER 1 HVAC SERVICE'S INC

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What does annual maintenance cost for a gas fireplace in Ottawa, including the TSSA-required service inspection?

Annual maintenance for a gas fireplace in Ottawa typically runs **\$150 to \$250**, which includes the TSSA-required professional service inspection and any minor adjustments needed to keep the appliance running safely and efficiently.

Why Annual Service Matters in Ottawa

Gas fireplaces are precision appliances, and Ottawa's extreme temperature swings — from -30 degrees Celsius in winter to +35 degrees in summer — create thermal stress on burner components, gas lines, ignition systems, and seals. A professional annual inspection catches small problems before they become safety issues or expensive repairs. More importantly, a TSSA-licensed gas fitter's inspection and compliance tag documents that your appliance meets Ontario safety standards, which is essential for home insurance coverage. Many insurance companies in Ottawa now require proof of annual gas fireplace servicing, and some will deny claims related to a gas appliance if you cannot produce documentation of regular professional maintenance.

The annual service typically includes a visual inspection of the burner assembly and flame pattern, testing the ignition system and thermostat, checking gas pressure and burner valve operation, inspecting the venting system for blockages or deterioration, testing the blower motor (if equipped), cleaning the burner ports if needed, checking the glass for cracks or seal degradation, and verifying that all clearances to combustibles remain safe. After the inspection, the technician issues a compliance label confirming the work was performed by a licensed professional.

What You Can Do Between Professional Services

You can extend the life of your gas fireplace by cleaning the glass regularly using only manufacturer-recommended glass cleaner (never use household glass cleaners, which leave residue that damages the glass coating), vacuuming dust and debris from the exterior vents and intake grilles with a soft brush attachment, and checking the remote batteries before the heating season begins. Keep the area around exterior vents and intakes clear of snow, leaves, and debris — in Ottawa's snowy winters, blocked vents can lead to performance problems or safety issues. If you notice any changes in flame colour (it should be predominantly blue with perhaps small yellow tips at the logs), unusual odours, difficulty igniting, or the glass fogging or discolouring, call a licensed technician immediately rather than waiting for the annual service.

Budget Reality

While \$150 to \$250 might seem like an annual expense, it is far less expensive than emergency repairs or replacing a gas fireplace damaged by deferred maintenance. A burner valve replacement, for example, can cost \$300 to \$600, and ignition system repairs often run \$250 to \$450. In Ottawa's climate, where you are likely running your gas fireplace regularly from October through April — that is six months of regular use — annual professional maintenance is genuinely worth the investment for safety and peace of mind.

When you are ready to schedule your annual service, you can browse TSSA-licensed gas fitters who service fireplaces through the Ottawa Construction Network directory, which connects you with experienced heating and gas professionals across the region.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- 613Bins
- RenoMotion Inc.
- B.A Gas Works
- Ottawa Masonry Contractor
- M.O.T. CONSTRUCTION INC.

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Q20

Are there any Ontario Greener Homes or municipal grants that help offset the cost of an energy-efficient fireplace in Ottawa?

The short answer is that direct grants specifically for fireplace installation are rare in Ottawa and Ontario, but there are a few indirect funding pathways and rebate programs worth exploring if you're upgrading to a more efficient heating appliance. Energy-efficient fireplaces and wood stoves can qualify for some provincial and municipal incentives when they are part of a broader home energy retrofit, though availability and eligibility vary significantly.

Understanding Your Options

The **Canada Greener Homes Grant** (federal program) used to offer up to \$5,000 in rebates for eligible home energy improvements, including high-efficiency heating appliances. However, the program was significantly scaled back in 2023-2024, and as of 2025, direct grants for fireplace or wood stove installation are no longer available

through the federal program. If you hear about the Greener Homes Grant from an older source, it's worth checking Service Canada or reaching out to Ottawa's Office of Energy and Sustainability, but don't count on federal funding for this project.

Enbridge Gas rebates occasionally appear for natural gas heating efficiency improvements, but these typically focus on furnaces, heat pumps, and water heaters rather than gas fireplaces. It's worth calling Enbridge directly (1-800-668-3476) to ask whether your specific gas fireplace upgrade qualifies — some premium direct-vent units with high Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency (AFUE) ratings above 75 percent might qualify for a modest rebate (\$100 to \$300), but this is increasingly rare.

The **City of Ottawa's Sustainable Development Program** occasionally offers tax incentives or rebate programs for homeowners making energy-efficient upgrades, but these programs change annually and are often income-tested. Your best bet is to call Ottawa's Office of Energy and Sustainability at 3-1-1 or visit ottawa.ca/sustainability to ask whether any current rebates apply to your fireplace project. As of early 2025, direct fireplace rebates through the city are limited, but programs may exist for comprehensive energy audits that bundle multiple improvements together.

Some municipal programs in surrounding communities — particularly Kanata, Barrhaven, and Stittsville — occasionally offer small rebates (\$200 to \$500) for wood stove or fireplace upgrades as part of air quality improvement initiatives, since wood burning contributes to winter particulate pollution in the National Capital Region. These are community-specific, so if you live outside Ottawa proper, contact your local municipality's sustainability or environment office.

Why Direct Fireplace Grants Are Limited

Fireplaces and wood stoves occupy a strange position in energy policy. While a modern EPA-certified wood stove at 75 percent efficiency is dramatically more efficient than an old open fireplace at 30 percent, government incentive programs tend to prioritize primary heating systems (furnaces, heat pumps) over supplemental heating. Gas fireplaces deliver 70 to 85 percent efficiency but cost \$3,500 to \$7,500 installed — a significant out-of-pocket expense — yet don't generate the same policy attention as air-source heat pumps or furnace replacements.

Additionally, Ontario's focus in recent years has shifted toward electrification (heat pumps) and away from fossil fuel heating, which has made direct rebates for gas appliances less common. Wood stoves, while renewable and efficient, are viewed with caution by air quality regulators because wood smoke contributes to winter particulate pollution in Ottawa and surrounding communities, particularly during cold, stagnant weather. This creates a perverse incentive structure where upgrading from an old, polluting wood stove to a modern, efficient one might not qualify for the same rebates as installing an electric heat pump.

Making the Efficiency Argument for Your Project

If you are considering a fireplace or wood stove upgrade primarily for supplemental heating rather than ambiance, you can strengthen your case for any available rebates by framing it as a heating efficiency project. Document the current state of your heating system, get a professional energy audit (some utilities or municipalities offer these at reduced cost), and show how the new appliance will reduce your primary heating load during winter months. A modern direct-vent gas fireplace with a 80 percent AFUE rating, for example, can meaningfully reduce natural gas consumption for primary heating during autumn and spring shoulder seasons when you don't want to fire up the furnace.

For wood stoves, similarly emphasize the efficiency gains if you are replacing an older unit. An old wood stove at 50 to 60 percent efficiency burning 6 to 8 cords per season produces far more creosote, pollution, and wasted fuel than a modern catalytic or non-catalytic stove at 75 to 80 percent efficiency burning 3 to 4 cords for the same heat output. Some municipalities view this as an air quality improvement worth supporting.

Tax Deductions and Home Resale Value

While direct grants are limited, don't overlook the secondary benefits. In some cases, energy-efficient fireplace upgrades may qualify as home improvement expenses that increase your property's adjusted cost base for capital gains purposes — consult a tax professional about whether your specific project qualifies. More tangibly, a properly installed and maintained fireplace or wood stove adds genuine value and appeal to a home in Ottawa's climate. Buyers explicitly seek properties with functioning fireplaces for the combination of heating utility and ambiance, meaning your investment recovers through increased resale value in ways that a furnace or heat pump upgrade often does not.

Taking Action

Your best immediate steps are: (1) Call 3-1-1 and ask Ottawa's Office of Energy and Sustainability whether any current city or region-wide rebates apply to your specific fireplace project; (2) Contact Enbridge Gas directly to ask about rebates for high-efficiency direct-vent gas fireplaces; (3) If you live in a specific municipality (Kanata, Barrhaven, Rockland, etc.), contact that municipality's sustainability office about local incentives; (4) Obtain a professional energy audit from an auditor accredited through Enbridge or another utility, which may uncover hidden rebate opportunities; and (5) Invest time in choosing the right fireplace for your heating needs and budget rather than chasing rebates — the long-term pleasure and heating value of a quality installation will far outweigh the modest rebate amounts currently available.

When you are ready to move forward with an installation, you can browse fireplace contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to find experienced installers who can advise on current rebate eligibility and help

you navigate any paperwork or compliance requirements for your specific project.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- 613Bins
- The Egress Group Inc
- East Coast Sheet Metal Inc
- McLaren Masonry
- Ottawa Heating Cooling Repair

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Q21

How much should I budget for a full chimney reline and WETT inspection before installing a new wood stove in Ottawa?

A full chimney reline in Ottawa runs **\$2,000 to \$5,000 for a stainless steel liner**, which is the standard choice for wood stoves, plus **\$250 to \$450 for a WETT Level 1 inspection**. If your chimney needs deeper investigation due to visible deterioration or unknown history, a WETT Level 2 inspection runs **\$350 to \$600**. So a complete pre-installation budget should be **\$2,250 to \$5,600 total**, assuming your chimney needs relining and a standard inspection.

However, the real question is whether relining is actually necessary for your specific chimney, and that's where the inspection becomes critical. Not every chimney needs a full reline. A WETT inspector will assess whether your existing clay tile liner is intact, whether the chimney has adequate draft for the stove you're planning to install, and whether the flue diameter matches the stove's requirements. If your chimney is in solid condition and the flue size works, you might get away with just a chimney cleaning and inspection — roughly \$300 to \$450 combined. But if the liner has cracked tiles, missing mortar, or visible deterioration (common in Ottawa's freeze-thaw climate after 40+ years), relining becomes essential for safety and to prevent carbon monoxide spillage into your home.

Ottawa's extreme continental climate makes chimney relining a more frequent necessity here than in milder regions. The repeated cycles of water freezing and thawing in mortar joints and brick gradually destroy clay tile liners from the inside out — this process, called spalling, can reduce a sound chimney to a crumbling hazard within a decade. Stainless steel liners resist this freeze-thaw damage far better than original clay tile and come with 20 to

30-year warranties. Cast-in-place cement liners (\$4,000 to \$8,000) are another option that simultaneously reinforces the exterior masonry, making them valuable if your chimney shows external spalling or cracking, but they cost more and take longer to cure.

One practical consideration: schedule your inspection and relining for **spring (April-May) or early fall (September-October)** rather than summer or winter. Masonry work requires temperatures above 5 degrees Celsius for mortar to cure properly, which effectively limits exterior chimney work to the shoulder seasons in Ottawa. If you wait until October or November when everyone suddenly decides their chimney needs work, you'll face longer wait times and higher prices. Getting your inspection done in spring and the reline completed before summer gives you a fully safe, code-compliant system ready for the heating season.

One more thing worth knowing: the WETT inspection should happen *before* you finalize which stove to buy, not after. The inspector will measure your flue dimensions, check draft performance, and verify that your chimney can safely handle the specific stove you're considering. A stove sized for a 6-inch flue won't perform safely in an 8-inch chimney, and that mismatch can only be caught through proper inspection. It's worth the \$250 to \$450 up front to avoid buying a stove that doesn't fit your chimney or discovering mid-installation that your chimney needs unexpected work.

Your wood stove installation itself will run **\$4,500 to \$9,500 installed** when you factor in the stove (\$2,500 to \$5,000), chimney pipe, hearth pad, and labour. Adding the reline and inspection to that gives you a realistic total of roughly **\$6,750 to \$15,100** for the complete project. When you're ready to connect with a WETT-certified chimney inspector and an experienced wood stove installer in Ottawa, you can browse fireplace and chimney contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to compare services and get written quotes.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Homeupgraders
- JC Carpentry
- Pure Flow Water Solutions inc.
- Denys Builds Designs Renovations
- Innovation Concrete Grind & Polish

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What's the total cost difference between installing an electric fireplace versus a direct-vent gas fireplace in Ottawa?

The installed cost difference between an electric fireplace and a direct-vent gas fireplace in Ottawa is substantial — you're looking at **\$2,800 to \$9,700 more** for a gas unit, depending on the specific models you compare and whether you need a new gas line run to the fireplace location.

A basic electric fireplace installation in Ottawa runs **\$700 to \$3,800 total** — that's the unit itself (\$500 to \$3,000) plus installation labour (\$200 to \$800). At the lower end, you can install a quality electric fireplace in a standard room location for around \$1,200. At the premium end, a sophisticated electric unit with realistic flame effects and integrated surround work approaches \$3,800.

A direct-vent gas fireplace installation costs **\$3,500 to \$7,500 for a standard unit**, which is the most popular gas fireplace choice in Ottawa because it draws combustion air from outside and vents sealed exhaust directly out through the wall or roof — meaning it doesn't consume household oxygen or compromise indoor air quality. This price includes the gas fireplace unit, venting materials (typically a sealed double-wall vent pipe), installation labour, and TSSA compliance tagging by a licensed gas fitter. If you need a new gas line run from your meter to the fireplace location — which adds \$500 to \$1,500 depending on distance and routing difficulty — the total climbs to **\$4,000 to \$9,000**.

Why This Difference Matters in Ottawa's Climate

The cost gap reflects fundamental differences in function and operating expense that become important in Ottawa's extreme winters. An electric fireplace provides ambiance and modest supplemental heat (typically 5,000 BTU output, enough to warm one room), but it costs significantly more to operate than gas. In Ottawa, where heating season runs from October through April and temperatures regularly drop below -20 degrees Celsius, running an electric fireplace costs roughly 8 to 12 cents per hour at current Ottawa Hydro rates — about \$20 to \$30 per month if you run it 8 hours daily through a typical winter. A gas fireplace costs roughly 2 to 4 cents per hour to operate, making it the much cheaper heating choice over a full winter season despite the higher upfront installation cost.

Homeowners often justify the electric fireplace's lower initial cost for specific situations: a rental property where you cannot modify the building structure, a condo where you lack access to exterior venting, a bedroom or office where you want supplemental heat without the commitment of a gas line, or simply because you prioritize the visual appeal of the flames without needing meaningful heat output.

However, if you plan to own the home long-term and use the fireplace regularly during Ottawa winters, the gas fireplace's superior efficiency and dramatically lower operating costs usually justify the \$3,000 to \$6,000 higher

upfront investment within 3 to 5 heating seasons. A direct-vent gas unit also increases home resale value in Ottawa's market — buyers recognize the practical heating benefit in a city where temperatures hit -25 to -30 degrees with wind chill regularly.

Additional Cost Considerations

An electric fireplace's main advantage is simplicity: you plug it in (or hardwire it if preferred), and it runs. A direct-vent gas fireplace requires annual service (roughly \$150 to \$250 per year) to maintain the burner, ignition system, and blower in safe working order. Over a 15-year ownership period, that service cost accumulates to \$2,250 to \$3,750. Still, even with annual service factored in, the gas unit's operating cost savings usually exceed its total ownership cost advantage.

If you're installing either unit into an existing masonry fireplace as an insert — rather than as a standalone unit — the pricing changes modestly: a gas fireplace insert runs \$2,500 to \$5,500 installed (slightly cheaper than a standalone unit because no new venting needs to be framed into exterior walls), while an electric insert runs \$700 to \$3,000. The cost difference narrows, but the operating cost advantage of gas remains the same.

When you're ready to compare contractors and get specific quotes for your home's layout and existing infrastructure, the Ottawa Construction Network directory can connect you with experienced fireplace installers who work with both electric and gas systems. Getting quotes from at least three contractors will give you accurate pricing for your specific situation — some homes require more complex venting or gas line routing, which affects the final cost.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Homeupgraders
- The Egress Group Inc
- Floor-2-Wall Inc
- Humble Homes - property maintenance
- SDR Electric, Plumbing & Heating Inc.

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Q23

How much value does adding a fireplace add to an Ottawa home at resale compared to the installation cost?

A fireplace typically adds **\$3,000 to \$8,000 in resale value** to an Ottawa home, depending on the fireplace type, home price point, and neighbourhood — which means a fireplace often returns **40 to 70 percent of its installation cost** at resale, assuming the fireplace is modern, properly maintained, and appeals to buyers in your market segment.

This modest-to-moderate return on investment stands in sharp contrast to the emotional and practical value homeowners experience year-round. Understanding this gap — between what a fireplace costs to install and what it adds at resale — is crucial for making an informed decision about whether to add one to your Ottawa home.

The Ottawa Context

Ottawa's extreme winter climate creates strong demand for fireplaces among buyers, but the market is competitive enough that fireplaces are now considered standard amenities rather than premium features in many neighbourhoods. A home without a fireplace is not at a significant disadvantage in most Ottawa markets — buyers seeking supplemental heat or ambiance expect to find one, but its absence rarely becomes a deal-breaker. When a fireplace is present, buyers factor it into their valuation, but they do not typically pay a dramatic premium for it the way they might for a renovated kitchen or primary bathroom.

The type of fireplace matters enormously for resale appeal. A modern gas fireplace with realistic flame effects and efficient direct-vent design appeals to a broad buyer base — especially younger families, downsizers, and people seeking low-maintenance heating. A wood stove or wood-burning fireplace appeals more narrowly to buyers who actively want the authentic experience and do not mind the responsibility of annual chimney maintenance and seasonal wood storage. An electric fireplace in a condo or apartment can be a selling feature for renters or buyers seeking rentable units, but it has minimal resale impact in a single-family home — most homeowners view it as a temporary aesthetic solution rather than a genuine heating asset. A recently installed fireplace insert converting an old, non-functioning masonry fireplace adds much more resale value than an insert in a fireplace that buyers can still see is non-functional, because it signals both functionality and responsible maintenance.

The Numbers

A typical Ottawa home selling in the \$500,000 to \$750,000 range might add \$4,000 to \$6,000 in resale value from a mid-range gas fireplace installation costing \$3,500 to \$7,500. A luxury home selling above \$1,000,000 might see \$6,000 to \$10,000 added in value from a premium linear gas fireplace costing \$5,000 to \$12,000 installed. A wood stove costing \$4,500 to \$9,500 installed might add \$2,000 to \$5,000 at resale, because the pool of buyers actively seeking a wood-burning appliance is smaller than the gas fireplace market. These are approximate ranges — actual impact depends on neighbourhood demand, home condition, and whether the fireplace integration is

seamless or looks retrofitted.

Why the Return Is Modest

The fireplace ROI is constrained because several factors limit its resale appeal. First, fireplaces are now common in the Ottawa resale market, so they do not command the premium they might have 20 years ago when they were still considered luxury additions. Second, buyers assume they will need to invest in maintenance — they factor in annual chimney cleaning, potential relining costs, and the operational responsibility of owning a wood stove. Third, a poorly integrated or dated-looking fireplace can actually *detract* from a home's appeal by making it look like a 1990s renovation rather than a thoughtful modern upgrade. Fourth, regional heating preferences differ — some Ottawa buyers prioritize central air conditioning and modern HVAC efficiency over fireplaces, especially in newer subdivisions where homes are already highly insulated.

When Fireplaces Make Financial Sense

Rather than thinking about resale ROI, consider fireplace value on these terms instead. If you plan to stay in your Ottawa home for 8 to 15 years, the practical heating benefit, the emotional comfort of a fireplace during long cold winters, the ambiance during family gatherings, and the supplemental heat savings during shoulder seasons deliver genuine quality-of-life value that extends far beyond the resale premium. A wood stove that heats your main living area and reduces your furnace runtime by 30 to 40 percent during winter will save you \$500 to \$1,200 per heating season in natural gas costs — savings that accumulate to \$4,000 to \$12,000 over a decade of ownership.

If you are installing a fireplace purely as a resale investment with the expectation of recovering 80 to 100 percent of installation costs, you will likely be disappointed. If you are installing a fireplace because you genuinely want the warmth, the aesthetic appeal, and the practical heating benefit during Ottawa's brutal winters, the modest resale premium is a pleasant bonus rather than the core justification.

Installation and Maintenance Impact on Resale Value

A fireplace that is **recently installed, fully functional, and certified compliant** (with WETT inspection for wood stoves, TSSA documentation for gas units) adds meaningfully more resale value than a fireplace that appears neglected or uncertain in its compliance status. Buyers want documentation that the work was done right. A wood stove with a current WETT inspection report and annual chimney cleaning records signals responsible ownership. A gas fireplace with TSSA compliance documentation and recent service proves the system is safe and operational. A masonry chimney with evidence of professional repointing, crown repair, and waterproofing suggests long-term viability. Conversely, a fireplace that appears to have not been serviced in years, or that lacks inspection documentation, can raise red flags and actually lower buyer confidence in the home's overall condition.

When you are ready to move forward with a fireplace installation, you can browse fireplace contractors through the **Ottawa Construction Network directory** to find experienced installers who understand what Ottawa buyers

expect to see in terms of proper installation and documentation. That attention to detail during installation often translates directly into higher resale confidence when the time comes to sell.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- 613Bins
- RenoMotion Inc.
- M.O.T. CONSTRUCTION INC.
- Coliseum concrete & interlock
- Ottawa Heating Cooling Repair

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Q24

Is a wood-burning or gas fireplace cheaper to operate over a full Ottawa winter heating season?

Over a full Ottawa winter heating season, a gas fireplace is typically cheaper to operate than a wood-burning fireplace — but the difference is smaller than most people expect, and a wood-burning fireplace offers heating benefits that pure cost calculations don't fully capture.

Let's run the actual numbers for Ottawa. Natural gas in Ottawa currently costs approximately \$0.14 to \$0.18 per cubic metre, or roughly \$1.40 to \$1.80 per therm. A modern direct-vent gas fireplace produces about 25,000 to 35,000 BTU per hour and operates at 70 to 85 percent efficiency, meaning you actually use about 30,000 to 45,000 BTU of gas to deliver 25,000 BTU of usable heat. Running a gas fireplace 6 hours daily for 150 days (mid-October through early April) costs approximately \$1,800 to \$2,800 per season for fuel alone.

Wood costs \$350 to \$450 per cord delivered in Ottawa, and a modern EPA-certified wood stove burns 4 to 6 cords per season depending on how heavily you use it as supplemental heat. That's \$1,400 to \$2,700 in wood costs annually. However, wood heating requires significant labor — stacking, seasoning, hauling to the stove, and cleaning ash daily — which many homeowners don't factor into their calculations.

Here's where it gets interesting: the real operating cost advantage of gas becomes meaningful only if you compare it to an open masonry fireplace, which operates at just 30 to 40 percent efficiency (meaning 60 to 70 percent of the

heat goes up the chimney). An open fireplace used casually for ambiance is pleasant and relatively inexpensive; used as a serious heat source, it's an expensive way to heat a room. A wood-burning insert or modern wood stove, by contrast, operates at 70 to 80 percent efficiency — rivalling gas for actual heating output while using a renewable fuel source that doesn't fluctuate with utility rates.

The real Ottawa consideration is this: if your fireplace or stove is your primary heating system, gas is somewhat cheaper to operate than wood. If it's supplemental heat for a room or two during the coldest months, the difference narrows significantly. A wood stove also acts as emergency backup heating during Ottawa ice storms and power outages — something a gas fireplace cannot do if your furnace loses power or if natural gas supply is interrupted. That resilience has genuine value on a January night when the grid fails.

Installation costs also factor into total cost of ownership. A new gas fireplace installation in Ottawa runs \$3,500 to \$7,500, while a complete wood stove setup with chimney costs \$4,500 to \$9,500. Over a 15-year lifespan, the installation cost amortizes to roughly \$240 to \$630 annually for gas, or \$300 to \$630 annually for wood. Once you include that, the total operating cost difference over a winter narrows to perhaps \$400 to \$800 per season in gas's favor — real money, but not transformative.

Important operating reality for Ottawa: Neither system is truly "cheap" compared to running your furnace on natural gas for whole-house heating. Both are better justified as a combination of supplemental heat, ambiance, and the genuine comfort of having a real fire during Ottawa's brutal winters than as a pure cost-saving measure. If you heat primarily with a furnace, adding either a gas fireplace or wood stove will increase your overall heating costs slightly, but it will give you the psychological and practical benefit of localized warmth, a focal point for the home, and in the case of wood, backup heat if other systems fail.

If cost is truly your only consideration, neither fireplace nor wood stove makes economic sense — they are most valuable to homeowners who value the experience of a fire, want supplemental zone heating for a particular room, or want backup heating resilience during power outages. Gas has a slight operating cost advantage and requires zero effort beyond turning it on. Wood requires work but offers fuel cost stability, renewable energy, and emergency backup capability.

If you're leaning toward one system over the other and want to discuss how it fits with your home's heating strategy and budget, the Ottawa Construction Network directory can connect you with fireplace and stove installers who can walk you through the specific costs and benefits for your space.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Justyn Rook Contracting

- [JC Carpentry](#)
- [The Next Reno](#)
- [ARTEXPRO Tile & Finishes](#)
- [JMY Renovations](#)

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What Enbridge rebates are available for upgrading from a wood-burning fireplace to a high-efficiency gas unit in Ottawa?

I don't have current information about specific Enbridge rebate programs for fireplace upgrades in the Ottawa area, and rebate offerings change seasonally and based on program availability. Rather than guess at details that could be outdated or incorrect, I'd strongly recommend contacting Enbridge directly — you can reach their rebate and incentives team through their website at enbridge.com or by calling their customer service line to ask specifically about gas fireplace conversion rebates available to residential customers in Ottawa in 2025-2026.

That said, here's what you should know about fireplace conversion economics in Ottawa and where rebates might fit in.

Converting a wood-burning fireplace to a high-efficiency gas insert or new gas unit makes genuine financial sense in Ottawa's climate because of the dramatic difference in heating efficiency and ease of use. A traditional open masonry fireplace operates at only 30 to 40 percent efficiency — most of the heat goes straight up the chimney. A modern direct-vent gas fireplace or insert achieves 75 to 85 percent efficiency, meaning vastly more of the fuel's energy heats your home rather than being wasted. Over a season of regular use during Ottawa's long, cold winters, that efficiency difference translates into real money saved on heating costs and reduced fuel consumption. A gas insert in an existing masonry fireplace costs \$2,500 to \$5,500 installed in Ottawa, while a full gas fireplace conversion (removing the wood-burning unit entirely) runs \$3,000 to \$7,000. Even without rebates, the efficiency gains typically recover the installation cost within 7 to 10 years of regular use, and the convenience factor — push-button ignition on a -25 degree Ottawa morning rather than splitting and stacking cords of wood — appeals to many homeowners.

Utility rebate programs have historically favored high-efficiency gas heating equipment, and Enbridge has offered incentives for residential gas appliance upgrades in parts of Ontario. However, these programs are competitive, often have limited annual funding, and may have specific eligibility requirements (like your current heating system type, home size, or service area). Some rebate programs also require pre-approval before you purchase or install the equipment, meaning you need to contact the utility before hiring a contractor. This timing detail is critical — installing the unit first and then applying for a rebate may disqualify you entirely.

When you contact Enbridge, ask about: any current rebates or incentives specifically for gas fireplace or gas insert installations, whether pre-approval is required before installation, whether the rebate applies to both the equipment and labour or equipment only, what documentation you'll need to provide (such as a professional installation receipt from a TSSA-licensed gas fitter), and whether there are any restrictions based on your postal code or service area within Ottawa. Also ask whether they offer any incentives for upgrading to a condensing model — the most efficient

gas units now available, though they cost more upfront.

Beyond Enbridge, also investigate whether the City of Ottawa or the provincial government has any retrofit programs or tax incentives for home heating efficiency improvements. The federal government has occasionally offered incentive programs for residential energy efficiency upgrades, though these vary by year and program. Your accountant or tax advisor may also know of any provincial or federal tax credits that apply to energy-efficient home heating improvements.

When you do get pricing for your conversion, be sure the quote includes a TSSA compliance tag and documentation confirming the work was performed by a licensed gas fitter — this is both a legal requirement in Ontario and often a condition of utility rebates. If you're weighing this decision, you can browse experienced gas fireplace installers through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to compare conversion quotes and get a sense of what professional installation costs in your specific area of Ottawa.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Homeupgraders
- The Egress Group Inc
- Core Climate Ltd.
- East Coast Sheet Metal Inc
- McLaren Masonry

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Q26

How much does it cost to install a gas fireplace insert in an Ottawa home with an existing masonry chimney?

A gas fireplace insert into an existing masonry chimney in Ottawa typically costs **\$2,500 to \$5,500 installed**, with most homeowners paying in the \$3,500 to \$4,500 range for a quality standard-output unit. This price includes the insert itself, installation labour, necessary venting modifications, gas line connections, and basic testing.

Why the Price Range Varies in Ottawa

The final cost depends on several factors specific to your home and chimney. First is the insert's output and features — a basic direct-vent gas insert with simple controls and modest heating capacity (around 30,000 to 40,000 BTU) sits at the lower end, while a higher-output model with remote control, adjustable flame intensity, and decorative faceplate options pushes toward the upper range. Second is your existing chimney condition. If your masonry chimney is structurally sound and already has proper clearances, the installation is straightforward. If the chimney needs a liner replacement, chimney cap repair, or crown waterproofing before the insert can be safely installed, you're looking at additional costs of \$2,000 to \$5,000 for the relining alone.

Third is your gas line situation. If a gas line already runs near your fireplace location, connection costs are minimal (\$500 to \$1,000). If the gas line needs to be extended from your meter across the house to your fireplace, you're adding \$500 to \$1,500 depending on distance and whether the line can run through accessible spaces or requires wall demolition.

Critical Considerations for Ottawa Chimneys

Ottawa's extreme freeze-thaw cycle means your existing masonry chimney may look fine on the surface but have hidden problems that must be addressed before installing an insert. A WETT-certified inspector should evaluate the chimney before any insert installation — this typically costs \$250 to \$450 for a Level 1 inspection. The inspector will check for spalling (freeze-thaw damage to bricks and mortar), missing or deteriorated mortar joints, a compromised chimney crown, and proper sizing for the new insert's venting requirements. If your chimney crown is cracked or the cap is missing, expect to add \$200 to \$1,200 for crown repair or cap installation — both are essential to prevent water infiltration that accelerates chimney deterioration in Ottawa's climate.

Most existing masonry chimneys will also need a stainless steel chimney liner rated for gas venting. This is not always optional — if your chimney was originally built for a wood fireplace, it may not meet current venting codes for a gas insert, or the flue may be undersized for the insert's output. A stainless steel liner installation costs \$2,000 to \$5,000 depending on chimney height and diameter.

Gas Work Requires a Licensed Professional

This is legally important: any gas line connection, appliance installation, or gas work must be performed by a **TSSA-licensed gas fitter** (G2 or G3 certificate). This is non-negotiable in Ontario — unlicensed gas work is illegal, voids your home insurance, and creates serious carbon monoxide and explosion hazards. After installation, a licensed technician must test the insert, verify safe operation, and install a TSSA compliance label on the unit. Your paperwork should include documentation confirming that a licensed gas fitter performed the work.

Direct-vent gas inserts are the best choice for Ottawa homes because they draw combustion air from outside through one vent pipe and exhaust through another, meaning they are completely sealed from your living space.

This design eliminates indoor air quality concerns and prevents negative pressure issues that can develop in tightly sealed modern homes, especially during Ottawa winters when your furnace and exhaust fans create strong depressurization.

Timeline and Seasonal Considerations

Because gas work can be done year-round, you can install a gas insert any time — there is no seasonal restriction like there is for masonry chimney work. However, avoid scheduling during Ottawa's busiest heating season (October through November), when TSSA-licensed gas fitters are booked weeks in advance and can command premium pricing. Spring and early fall offer the best availability and potentially faster installation timelines.

If your chimney needs repairs or relining before the insert installation, schedule that work for late spring (May or June) or early fall (September or October), when exterior masonry work can proceed safely in temperatures above 5 degrees Celsius.

When you are ready to move forward, you can browse fireplace contractors and gas fitters through the Ottawa Construction Network directory to compare options and reach out directly — get at least three written quotes that specify the exact insert model, all materials included, chimney inspection findings, gas line scope of work, permit responsibilities, timeline, and warranty terms.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects Ottawa homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Homeupgraders
- JC Carpentry
- Geerts Roofing Inc
- Callandgone
- ARTEXPRO Tile & Finishes

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Q27

What does a custom-sized fireplace screen cost in Ottawa for a non-standard fireplace opening that doesn't fit off-the-shelf models?

A custom-sized fireplace screen for a non-standard opening in Ottawa typically costs \$400 to \$1,200 depending on the size, materials, and complexity of the design. Basic custom mesh screens with simple frames start around \$400 to \$600, while decorative wrought iron or brass screens with intricate patterns can reach \$800 to \$1,200 or more for large openings.

Ottawa's older homes often have unique fireplace dimensions that don't match modern standard sizes, particularly in heritage properties in areas like the Glebe, Sandy Hill, or Westboro where fireplaces were built to custom specifications decades ago. Many of these openings are wider, taller, or have unusual proportions compared to today's standardized fireplace inserts and accessories. Additionally, some Ottawa homeowners have renovated their fireplaces with custom stonework or tile surrounds that create non-standard opening dimensions.

The cost depends heavily on the screen type and materials. **Flat mesh screens** with basic metal frames are the most affordable custom option at \$400 to \$700. **Folding screens** with decorative panels cost \$500 to \$900 for custom sizing. **Curved or bowed screens** that follow the contour of an arched fireplace opening run \$600 to \$1,000. **Wrought iron screens** with custom scrollwork or family initials can reach \$800 to \$1,200. Glass doors are significantly more expensive for custom sizing, typically \$1,200 to \$2,500, and require professional measurement and installation.

Most custom screens require 2 to 4 weeks for fabrication once measurements are finalized. Always have the fireplace opening professionally measured rather than attempting to measure yourself — even small errors can result in a screen that doesn't fit properly. The screen must completely cover the opening to prevent sparks and embers from escaping into the room, which is especially important during Ottawa's long burning season when fireplaces see heavy use.

When shopping for a custom screen, verify that the manufacturer uses materials appropriate for high-heat applications and that the mesh size meets safety standards for spark protection. Some Ottawa metalworking shops and fireplace retailers offer custom screen fabrication, allowing you to work directly with local craftspeople who understand the unique requirements of heritage and custom fireplace openings common in the region.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Fireplaces. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority before starting any fireplace installation or chimney project. Information is current as of May 10, 2026 and may change. Visit ottawafireplaces.com for the latest answers.