



Brian Pounds/Connecticut Post

Tall order: Rick Magalnick of Rick's Chimney Service climbs up on a roof to brush out a customer's chimney. Magalnick, below, shows the brush he uses to do his work.

Clean sweep

Milford firm towers above all

WHAT: Rick's Chimney Service is run and operated by Rick Magalnick out of his Milford home. Magalnick, 37, uses outside help during his peak season between Aug. 15 and Jan. 15.

Hours are 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. by appointment — call early during fall and winter months at 783-0221. "Usually I'm going full-tilt until January."



GETTING STARTED: Magalnick was a machinist in Stamford for many years and also has a job as a firefighter in Norwalk. When the machinist business got slow, he moved to Norwalk to work for a chimney service. In September 1996, he opened his own company.

CHALLENGES/REWARDS: The most challenging part of running the business "is keeping up with the paperwork and phone calls."

Magalnick also has his share of chimney-related puzzles to solve, such as "smoking" — when a home reeks of a fireplace smell the day after a fire was lit. Homeowners think something is wrong with the chimney, he says, but "most of the time their wood is bad."

The most rewarding part of running the chimney service is solving the problems that others couldn't.

COST: Magalnick does primarily residential work. He charges about \$75 per chimney. Additional flues and wood stoves cost extra.

SCAMS: Magalnick recommends that customers avoid out-of-town operations that offer a rock-bottom price for a cleaning.



"They use a low price to get their foot in the door and then they come in and sell you all sorts of repairs that you don't need." Magalnick said customers should ask any company if it's certified by the Chimney Safety Institute of America in Maryland. He is certified and has a Connecticut contractor's License and insurance.

— JAMIE DELOMA

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