


Dryer Vent Cleaning

Importance of cleaning dryer vents and safety tips

Hazard Overview	<p>Over time, the interior surface of dryer vent piping or hose can become covered with debris from the drying process. Keeping dryer vents clean is important for several reasons. Firstly, plugged vents can reduce energy efficiency as dryers must work harder and longer to complete the clothes drying. Secondly, the accumulations can become ignited by the increased heat and a fire hazard can be created. Several such fires occur annually in residential buildings due to this buildup.</p>
Emergency Response	<p>If you believe a vent may require cleaning, call a professional immediately. The following are signs that may indicate a vent may need to be cleaned:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It takes longer than usual for clothes to dry. 2. Clothing from the dryer is hot to the touch upon completion. This may suggest that the dryer is overheating or doing excess work in the drying process. 3. You smell something burning when the drying is running. 4. The laundry room becomes hotter than usual when the dryer is running. 5. The vent hood to the outside does not open properly.  <p><i>Figure 1. Vent interior before and after cleaning</i></p>
Risk Control Tips	<p>The following tips may help to mitigate the hazards of dryer vents blockage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have dryers installed by professionals and have all vents cleaned on an annual basis. ✓ Do not use the dryer without a lint filter. ✓ Clean lint filter before and after each load of laundry. ✓ Ensure air exhaust vent pipe is not restricted and outdoor vent flap opens when the dryer is operating. ✓ Keep dryers in good working condition. ✓ Ensure the correct rated power outlet is being used and that the dryer is connected properly. ✓ Follow manufacturer's operating guidelines and do not overload dryer. ✓ Do not operate dryer when you are not at home or when everyone is in bed.

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