

Clothes Dryer Venting Safety

Lint and additional debris can build up in your clothes dryer vent and may cause your dryer to exhaust at less than optimum efficiency. This creates potentially hazardous conditions including carbon monoxide intrusion and the possibility for exhaust fires. If a gas clothes dryer is improperly vented or the exhaust duct itself is blocked by lint or debris, carbon monoxide can be forced back into your living space.

When a certified technician inspects and cleans a dryer vent, they also verify that the correct type of duct is in use. For example, plastic transition ducts (joining the dryer to the wall) should be replaced with metal duct, because it is non-flammable, unlike plastic.

Annual dryer exhaust vent inspections (also known as dryer exhaust duct inspections) are more necessary than ever before due to the complex construction of homes built today. Newer homes tend to have dryers located away from an outside wall in bathrooms, kitchens and in hall closets which is convenient, but potentially dangerous from a safety standpoint. These new locations mean that dryers tend to be vented longer distances and vents are generally installed with more bends to accommodate the extended path they must take through the home. As a result, dryer ducts are harder to access and this additional length creates more places where lint can collect and animals and birds can hide.

The Chimney Safety Institute of America recommends that CSIA Certified Dryer Exhaust Technicians® (C-DET) perform dryer vent inspections on an annual basis to ensure efficient operation of your clothes dryer system. Certified Dryer Exhaust Technicians have passed an extensive exam on the proper inspection and maintenance of dryer vents, including applicable codes and standards relating to these systems.

In addition to these safety considerations, annual clothes dryer exhaust inspections by a CSIA Certified Dryer Exhaust Technician® can also increase the efficiency of your clothes dryer and decrease the wear on your appliance:

Appliance Efficiency

A clean exhaust duct prevents heat, moisture and, in the case of gas clothes dryers, carbon monoxide from being trapped in your home. When this type of spillage occurs, energy, natural resources and time are all wasted because your appliance works too hard and runs longer than necessary.

Wear on Your Clothes Dryer

If your dryer takes twice as long to dry clothes as it should, the number of loads that it will dry in its lifetime is cut in half. When the dryer runs at higher than designed temperatures, the life of your clothes dryer decreases even more. This can lead to the heating element burning out or a fire could ignite as a result of overworked safety controls.

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