



# Clothes Dryer Fires

Clothes dryer fires are caused by reduced airflow in the dryer. Lint buildup in the trap causes overheating by considerably slowing down the drying action. When this occurs, the high temperature limit safety switch has to cycle on and off more than usual to control the heater. The majority of these switches are not designed to cycle on and off on a continuous basis which can cause them to overheat and fail, thus causing a fire.

## Warning Signs of Inadequate Clothes Dryer Venting

- Clothes take a very long time to dry, especially heavy articles of clothing such as towels or jeans
- Clothes feel hotter than usual at the end of the cycle
- The flapper on the vent hood remains closed when the dryer is on

## How to Be Clothes Dryer Safe

- Remove the lint from the lint trap after every load of laundry
- Do not fasten a bug screen or nylon stocking over the vent hood or other dryer opening
- Do not kink or crush the vent pipe or the fittings to make up for lack of room behind your dryer
- Do not use soft flexible duct made of plastic film or foil over coils of wire
- Do not vent the dryer into the attic, crawl space or back into the heating ducts. Vent only to the outside of your dwelling
- Do not put into your dryer, rags or other pieces of cloth which have been used to sponge up flammable liquids

## Advantages of Proper Dryer Installation and Maintenance

1. **Proper Airflow:** This helps prevent the dryer from operating on its high temperature safety limit control. Maximum dryer performance is achieved by using proper venting materials and may extend the life of your dryer. It can increase your clothing's lifespan, too, due to lower drying temperatures.
2. **Reduced Cost:** A crucial factor of effective dryer performance is optimal airflow. A properly installed all-metal dryer vent will help ensure this airflow. When clothes are given the appropriate amount of air, they dry quicker and tumble less. This results in less wear on the clothing. It is energy-efficient, too, as less electricity or gas are used.

