



## Building Safety Tip \* Clothes Dryer Exhaust

### Check Condition of Clothes Dryer Exhaust Duct

#### The Warning Signs:

- Outside Openings Blocked/Clogged
- Flexible Hoses Kinked/Clogged
- Laundry Takes Longer to Dry
- Dryer Surfaces Unusually Hot
- Laundry Feels Unusually Hot
- Laundry Room Unusually Hot
- Humidity/Condensation



[www.vpmia.org](http://www.vpmia.org)



[www.iccsafe.org](http://www.iccsafe.org)

Thousands of house fires in the US are attributed to clothes dryers each year. These fires cause millions of dollars in property damage and are sometimes fatal. Exterior openings and interior ducts can become blocked by lint deposits which build up over time. Flexible hoses with sharp bends and kinks restrict air flow and promote blockages. White plastic hoses tear easily and can burn quickly. Exhaust ducts which travel long distances and ducts with multiple offsets are prone to blockage. Birds and other animals can nest inside exterior openings and, where installed near ground level, openings can become obstructed. Clothes dryer exhaust ducts should be inspected on a regular basis and special attention should be paid to flexible connectors, changes in direction and exhaust systems concealed within floors, ceilings and walls.



TOPICAL FIRE REPORT SERIES

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### Clothes Dryer Fires in Residential Buildings (2008–2010)

These topical reports are designed to explore trends of the U.S. fire problem as depicted through data collected in the U.S. Fire Administration's (USFSA) National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). Each topical report briefly addresses the nature of the specific fire or fire-related topic, highlights important findings from the data, and may suggest other resources to consult for further information. Also included are several examples of the headlines that demonstrate some of the issues addressed in the report or that get the report topic in context.

#### Findings

- An estimated 2,900 clothes dryer fires in residential buildings are reported to U.S. fire departments each year and cause an estimated 6 deaths, 200 injuries, and \$35 million in property loss.
- Clothes dryer fire incidence in residential buildings was higher in the fall and winter months, peaking in January at 1.1 percent.
- Failure to clean (34 percent) was the leading factor contributing to the ignition of clothes dryer fires in residential buildings.
- Dust, fiber, and lint (28 percent) and clothing not on a person (27 percent) were, by far, the leading items that ignited in clothes dryer fires in residential buildings.
- Fifty-four percent of clothes dryer fires in residential buildings were confined to the object of origin.

**Read the FEMA Report**

