

CLOTHES DRYER FACT SHEET

The installation and maintenance of clothes dryers are an important part of ensuring that the appliance performs as designed. The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM) has reviewed many of the building codes used across the U.S. to ensure that the installation of clothes dryers is in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

AHAM, on behalf of its home laundry manufacturers, submitted comments to the 1999 edition of the National Fuel Gas Code (ANSI Z223.1/NFPA 54) to specify that exhaust and transition vents shall not be constructed of coiled-wire foil or plastic material and that vents be installed in accordance with the clothes dryer manufacturer's installation instructions. AHAM recommends that clothes dryer vents be constructed of rigid sheet metal or corrugated semi-rigid sheet metal material.

The National Fuel Gas Code offers criteria for the installation and operation of gas piping and gas equipment on consumers' premises. It is intended to promote public safety by providing requirements for the safe and satisfactory utilization of gas.

In addition to submitting comments to the National Fuel Gas Code, AHAM suggests the following tips for the proper use and installation of residential clothes dryers. Consumers should always consult the manufacturer's instructions for guidelines specific to their clothes dryer.

Dryer Care and Maintenance

Installation - The dryer venting materials are an important factor in dryer performance and safety. AHAM recommends the use of rigid sheet metal or corrugated semi-rigid sheet metal venting material. Do not use coiled-wire foil or plastic venting material. Not using the recommended venting materials could reduce airflow and drying time could be lengthened unnecessarily.

Maintenance - Dryers need maintenance like any other appliance. In order to keep sufficient airflow around the heating source, lint must be removed from the dryer and vent. Lint and dust can build-up over time and reduce airflow, resulting in decreased performance, by not allowing air to circulate freely through the dryer. Don't forget to clean the back of the dryer, where lint can be trapped. Clean the lint filter before and after each load. The interior of the appliance and venting system should be cleaned periodically by qualified service personnel. If you notice that the drying time is longer, clean the vent system thoroughly to ensure that there is proper airflow. Keep the area around the dryer clean and free of clutter.

Dryer Do's

- Follow manufacturer's instructions on installing the dryer and vent system.

- Replace coiled-wire foil or plastic venting with rigid sheet metal or corrugated semi-rigid sheet metal venting.
- Clean the lint filter before and after each cycle.
- Inspect venting system behind dryer to ensure it is not damaged or crushed.

Dryer Don'ts - Do NOT dry the following items in the dryer:

- Anything containing foam, rubber or plastic (i.e. bathroom rugs, non-slip mats).
- Any item which the dryer manufacturer's instructions specifically state "dry away from heat."
- Glass fiber materials (unless manufacturer's instructions permit).
- Materials on which there was anything flammable (e.g., alcohol, cooking oils, gasoline, spot removers, dry-cleaning solvents, etc.). These should be dried outdoors or in a well-ventilated room, away from heat even if they have gone through the wash cycle. Flammable substances give off vapors that could ignite or explode.
- Fabric soiled with cooking oils.

For more information, please call Jill Notini at 202-872-5955 ext. 318 or email jnotini@aham.org.

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