

Keep home safe from dryer fires

In honor of National Fire Prevention Week, RepairClinic.com shares three tips to keep homes and families safe from clothes dryer fires.

Every year, clothes dryers cause thousands of major residential fires in the U.S.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 15,500 fires associated with clothes dryers occur annually. These fires account for an average of 10 deaths and 310 injuries and more than \$84.4 million in property damage annually.

People are often surprised to learn of the primary culprit: lint. Dryer venting can become clogged with lint, causing a dangerous buildup of heat and an instant fire that spreads fast.

1. Clean out dryer venting at least once per year

A venting system should be cleaned out from inside of the dryer to the outside vent cap at least once per year. Professionals can be hired for this or homeowners can purchase a long brush or cleaning kit with instructional DVD to do it on their own and save money.

RepairClinic.com also recom-

mends getting a dryer vent safety system, a new way to monitor your dryer vent.

Homeowners should pay attention to drying time. If it's taking longer for clothes to dry, it's likely that lint is clogging the venting system. It's important to clean out the lint as soon as possible. Waiting to do this will threaten safety.

2. White vinyl venting should be replaced immediately with an aluminum equivalent.

White vinyl no longer meets national fire code standards in the U.S., as it is considered highly flammable. Aluminum venting may be purchased at any hardware store.

3. Clean out your dryer's lint screen after every load.

Dryer lint screens should be cleaned out after every load. For extra precaution, homeowners can use a bristled long brush to remove stubborn pieces of lint and pieces that collect in the screen's housing. A screen with tears should be replaced immediately.

Clothes dryer fires can be avoided in our homes with regular maintenance.

