

Clothes Dryers

- Fire Prevention Tips -

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that in 1997, there were 16,700 fires, 30 deaths and 430 injuries associated with clothes dryers. Some of these fires can occur when lint builds up in the filter or in the exhaust duct. Under certain conditions, when lint blocks the flow of air, excessive heat build-up can cause a fire in some dryers.

To prevent fires:

- ❑ Clean the lint filter regularly and make sure the dryer is operating properly. Clean the filter after each load of clothes. While the dryer is operating, check the outside exhaust to make sure exhaust air is escaping normally. If it is not, turn the dryer off and look inside both ends of the duct for lint. Remove any lint found there. If there are signs that the dryer is hotter than normal, this may be a sign that the dryer's temperature control thermostat needs servicing.
- ❑ If clothing is still damp at the end of a normal cycle or requires longer dryer times, this may be a sign that the exhaust or lint screen is blocked.
- ❑ Plastic Flexible duct should be replaced with rigid or flexible metal ducts. Inspect all Ducts for kinks or crushing, which can greatly reduce the airflow.
- ❑ Closely follow manufacturers' instructions for new installations. Most manufacturers specify the use of a rigid or flexible metal duct to provide a minimum restriction of airflow. If metal duct is not available at the retailer where the dryer was purchased, check other locations, such as hardware or builder supply stores. If you are having the dryer installed, insist upon metal duct unless the installer has verified that the manufacturer permits the use of plastic duct.

