



Dryer Fires and Spontaneous Combustion



Dryers are a useful appliance, however, they can be a source of ignition and start a fire. Clarington Emergency & Fire Services would like to remind residents of some basic safety precautions for your dryer:

- Empty the lint trap after **every** load
- Empty the dryer of all fabrics/materials when the drying cycle has finished. Do not leave a load of laundry in the dryer overnight.
- Not all detergents are capable of removing oils and grease from fabrics.
- Do not dry materials on which there is anything flammable (alcohol, cooking oils, gasoline, spot removers, dry-cleaning solvents, etc.). Flammable substances give off vapours that could ignite or explode
- Check the vent piping on a regular schedule for the accumulation of lint and clean as necessary
- Clean the inside of the dryer of lint build-up. This is the area around the drum. Consult your instruction manual for directions on accessing the heating element and cabinet interior. Be sure to follow all safety precautions
- Take the lint filter out and wash it with hot soapy water and scrub it with a brush.
- In some cases, the filter mesh may be clogged with an invisible waxy build up from fabric softener sheets. This build-up can contain heat, possibly burning out the heating unit or worse, start a fire
- Use metal vent piping rather than the flexible plastic hose

By following the above recommendations, not only may you reduce your chance of fire but your dryer will work more efficiently and may last longer!

For additional information, please contact Clarington Emergency & Fire Services, 905-623-5126.