

Dryer Vent Maintenance

Reminder: Gary is no longer performing this service for Chapman Place residents; however, you may borrow the brushes or buy your own kit. We strongly recommend hiring a professional annually (see Vendors) or check in the Yellow pages.

According to the National Fire Protection Administration, from 2002-2005, there was an average of 16,867 dryer-related fires annually, resulting in 26 fatalities per year, 436 injuries and \$ 187 million in property damage.

Warning signs include:

- an extended length of time to dry your clothes evidence that something may be restricting the air flow in the duct
- lint dust on the water lines, electric cords, wall, top of dryer all evidence there may be back-pressure in the duct caused by a clogged duct or poorly/improperly vented dryer
- a large quantity of lint on the ground, on the wall, or in bushes at the exhaust exit indicating a possible problem with the lint trap

What can you do?

- Clean lint screen before and after every load
- Replace plastic or foil accordion type ducting material with rigid or corrugated semi-rigid metal duct
- Take care when cleaning items that have volatile chemicals on them
- Clean behind (and under) the dryer
- Clean dryer vent and exhaust duct periodically – an annual schedule is preferable

Why annual, why professional?

Certainly the number one reason is a potential fire hazard. Second, as everyone struggles with energy costs, a clogged dryer vent can significantly increase energy consumption. A cleaning by a professional may also detect other problems such as ducts venting directly into a wall, ceiling cavity or attic space. This can lead to significant problems and if found should be remedied immediately. Also birds can nest in the dryer vent and the correct type of exterior vent cap is a better long term solution than trying to clean screens which fill up quickly.