

## Don't Forget Your Clothes Dryer Vent

The Chimney Safety Institute of America cautions the public that there's a growing fire and carbon monoxide poisoning danger that could result in unnecessary deaths, injuries or property damage – the obstruction or improper venting of clothes dryer exhaust ducts.

To combat dryer fires and carbon monoxide poisoning, the CSIA recommends that homeowners have clothes dryer exhaust ducts professionally inspected annually – and maintained as necessary.

### Dryer Locations

CSIA points out that clothes dryers have historically either been located in basements or on the main floor of a house and generally within a short distance from an outside wall. Because of these logistics, the danger of lint plugging the exhaust duct has been minimal.

But in today's complex and technologically sophisticated homes, many clothes dryers could be located in the inner core of the house in bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens and even in hall closets. These new locations mean dryers need to be vented longer distances and sometimes even with sharp turns and bends to accommodate the structure of the home. These complicated systems make exhaust ducts harder to reach and also create more places where lint can collect and pile up. Because lint is incredibly flammable it poses a fire risk.

### Natural Gas

The availability of natural gas clothes dryers is another reason why dryer exhaust duct maintenance is necessary. If a gas clothes dryer is not properly vented, it can cause carbon monoxide to be forced back into the home and that can be deadly.

### Obstructions

In addition to lint obstructions or improper venting, bird's nests or rodents and bug infestations can also plug up a vent causing potential fire hazards or carbon monoxide poisonings. Symptoms of a clogged clothes dryer exhaust duct include incomplete drying of clothes at normal temperatures and very hot dryer temperatures.

### Recommendations

CSIA recommends that clothes dryer exhaust duct inspections be performed by CSIA Certified Dryer Exhaust Duct Technicians. I have been formally tested in the proper inspection and maintenance of clothes dryer exhaust ducts by CSIA. When I inspect a clothes dryer exhaust duct, I check to make sure there are no obstructions and if the installation is correct. I also verify that the correct type of vent is in use. For example, homes with plastic exhaust ducts are generally upgraded to metal exhaust ducts.