

Clothes dryers can cause house fires!

Clothes dryers are the third most common appliance involved in house fires, following stoves and fixed area heaters (you know, the ones you see mounted on a wall or from a ceiling).

According to last year's U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission report, there were nearly 10,000 residential fire losses where the source of the fire was in the clothes dryer or vent. Clothes dryers can catch fire due to excessive lint build-up in the exhaust pipe or inside the dryer. This lint build-up is often hidden from view. Here are some important (but very simple) steps you can take to reduce the chance of your dryer starting a fire:

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when installing the vent pipe.
- Keep the dryer vent clean and unplugged. Check for a plugged vent if the appliance does not dry clothes efficiently.
- Remove and clean the lint screen before each use.
- Keep all combustibles away from the appliance.
- Hire a qualified technician to periodically inspect your clothes dryer.

While we're on the subject...

Don't let your washing machine hang you up to dry. Hose failures cause millions of dollars of water losses each year. Check your washing machine hoses periodically, and, at the first sign of wear, replace them. Upgrading to a heavy-duty wire mesh hose or stainless steel hose is a good idea. And, if you're going to be away for awhile, turning off the water to your washing machine hoses isn't such a bad idea, either.



Who can remember?

You know that magical feeling every holiday when you start pulling all those decorations out and rediscover the lost treasures and mementos you've forgotten about during the year?

Now remember that sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach when you can't find a treasured item, or worse yet, when it's been stolen?

If you have a loss in the middle of summer, chances are you won't remember all of the holiday decorations you have up in the attic, out of sight and out of mind. The holidays are the right time to pull out the camcorder for a lot of reasons. So while you're at it, why not record your holiday decorations while they're up. Maybe you can even get Aunt Lucy to narrate.



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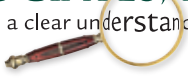
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FALL 2006

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Gold and diamonds fluctuate greatly in value from year to year. A good rule of thumb is to get your jewelry appraised every three to five years to make sure their replacement value is covered, especially if you haven't done so since the 1980s. If "Diamonds are a girl's best friend", perhaps your appraiser is your diamonds' best friend.

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