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The Hidden Danger in Your Laundry Room

Preventing Dryer Fires for National Fire Prevention Week

WACO, Texas (Oct. 2, 2009) – You take steps to keep your home safe and fire-free. You keep flammable materials in a safe environment, make sure all smoke alarms are working properly and teach your kids what to do in case of a fire. But have you ever thought to take fire safety into the laundry room?

Lint and debris in and around your dryer could be putting your home at risk for a dryer fire. The National Fire Protection Association estimates that in 2006, there were 17,700 home fires involving clothes dryers or washing machines resulting in 360 civilian injuries and 15 civilian deaths. The leading cause of dryer fires was failure to clean the appliance.

“Dryer fires are preventable with periodic maintenance to remove lint buildup inside the unit and the venting hose,” said Doug Rogers, president of Mr. Appliance Corp. “Following these tips and staying proactive will help prevent fires and potentially protect homes and save lives.”

Mr. Appliance® recommends these tips to keep your dryer operating properly:

- Keep the dryer as lint-free as possible by cleaning the lint screen or filter before or after each load of clothes. Hire a licensed appliance professional to clean the interior of the dryer chassis and inspect the rollers, belt, motor and heating system every one or two years.
- Keep the exhaust duct in good condition by disconnecting, cleaning, and inspecting the duct on a regular basis. If the opening outside the house is low to the ground, check it monthly for leaves, birds' nests and other debris. Or hire a licensed appliance expert to check it out for you.
- Use semi-rigid or flexible aluminum ducting behind the dryer and smooth rigid metallic ducting through the wall to the outside vent. Avoid using white vinyl hose if possible. Metallic ducting will withstand heat better and be less likely to break than vinyl.
- The exhaust should only vent to the outside of the houses - never to the attic or crawlspace. It's best to use a flap vent that will open when the dryer is in use and close when it is off. This will keep birds and other animals out of the vent and will keep the vent from getting clogged with lint as easily as it might with a mesh or grate vent covering.
- The vents should be as straight as possible, with all excess venting trimmed off. Twisting or crushing exhaust piping restricts the airflow.
- Try not to use screws to put your vent pipe together, because the screw shafts inside the piping collect lint and cause additional friction.

To learn more about dryer maintenance, visit www.mrappliance.com.

About Mr. Appliance®:

Mr. Appliance is North America's leading appliance repair franchise system. Established in 1996, its franchises provide full-service residential and light commercial appliance repair. *Mr. Appliance* has more than 150 locations throughout the United States and Canada and is consistently ranked among the top home service franchises by Entrepreneur magazine and other industry experts. *Mr. Appliance* is a subsidiary of The Dwyer Group, Inc. For more information, visit www.mrappliance.com.

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