

Unexpected Ways Fires Start

#4 Source: Appliances

The Problem:

Appliance fires in dryers and by hot water heaters happen more often than you think. They can be a ticking time bomb waiting to ignite into flames.

A True Fire Story:

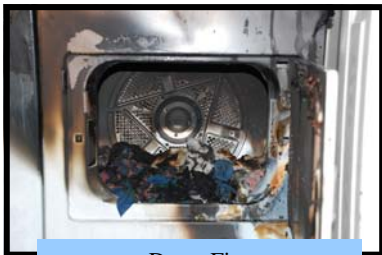
The Statistics:

7%
of fires,
4%
of deaths

A family was displaced from their home in NW Roanoke when their house caught on fire. The cause—clothes piled next to the hot water heater.

Water heaters are often

in the same room as the laundry, so clothes tend to pile up against the water heater near the flame. The problem is worse when the cover plate falls off the burner access. Dryer vents catch on fire when built-up dust and lint ignite from either the burners or the heating elements and create a fire path to built-up lint within the vent hose. Exhaust fans in bathrooms can also cause fires when dust builds up.



Dryer Fire



Clothes piled against a gas hot water heater.

The Solution:

- Make sure protective water heater combustion chamber covers are in place.
- Pull the back service panel from the dryer cabinet and clean all the lint from the interior and around the drum.
- Clean built-up lint from the vent line.
- Replace vinyl vent lines with smooth-walled metal ducts.
- Mark a “combustible free” zone 3 ft. away from your water heater with masking tape.
- Vacuum exhaust fan ducts in your bathroom.



Roanoke Fire-EMS
713 Third St., SW
Roanoke, VA 24016
540-853-2327 www.roanokeva.gov/fire-ems

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