What Makes Dryer Vent Systems Restrictive?

Many elements contribute to dryer venting efficiency. Most homeowners are unaware that lint accumulates over time and creates blockages, but that's just one factor that contributes to dryer exhaust performance. Restrictive vents result in longer drying times, increased abuse on clothes, decreased appliance lifespan, and create a possible fire hazard. This document will unveil the numerous types of restrictions that are often found in dryer vents nationwide.

Lint accumulation – Cleaning the lint screen after each cycle is critical for drying efficiency. Surprisingly, a good amount of lint makes it past the lint screen and into the dryer's exhaust run. This process does not happen overnight, but with time, lint accumulation plays a major role in dryer efficiency and even home safety. Also, lint accumulates in the bottom of the appliance and is often close to the heating element which makes for a dangerous combination.

Crushed/kinked hose – Pushing the dryer back too far against the wall just to gain an extra few inches results in crushing the flex hose. This common practice will likely crush or kink the transition duct making it nearly impossible to have efficient airflow.

Bird/rodent nests – The air coming out of a dryer vent is warm and it makes its way to the exterior on the roof or side of the house. Birds and rodents find this temperature appealing for a "home", especially since a dryer vent is a pre-built shelter for those critters. It's important to periodically check for these nests at the termination point to maintain strong airflow without killing any creatures. (Dead animals in the vent result in smelly homes too!)

Poor roof or side wall terminations – Until recently, little attention was given to rooftop and side wall dryer vent terminations with respect to airflow efficiency. Some popular vent caps choke the system, resulting in restrictive airflow – even when the ductwork is clean! Other commonly used wall vents are made of plastic material that deteriorates with UV rays.

Long runs – Building code requires that a dryer vent's linear length must be 35' or less. Penalties are incurred for 90 degree elbows (5 additional feet) and 45 degree elbows (2.5 additional feet). Shorter runs put less stress on the dryer and therefore create a more efficient system.

Numerous elbows – More hard turns in a dryer exhaust run create increased back pressure along with longer drying times. Evaluate the overall duct run to see where elbows can be eliminated or possibly converted to long-turn elbows that increase airflow and quicken the drying process.

The good news is that all of the above causes of airflow restriction can be corrected. Contact In-O-Vate Technologies to learn more about the various ways to improve dryer venting efficiency. Remember to have the dryer vent periodically cleaned in tandem with using proven innovative products to ensure your home is as safe and efficient as possible.