

know risk

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Clothes dryers cause fires

Clothes dryers have always been regarded as a potential fire risk but a series of recent claims with identical circumstances highlight a particular concern. In each instance, the cause was traced to the manufacturer's preprogrammed setting for the cool-down period (5 minutes).

Experts agree that the cool-down period should be programmed for at least 15 minutes to ensure safe operation.

We understand that this particular manufacturer is a major supplier of clothes dryers to the aged care sector.

Claims Report

Staff loaded towels into an industrial gas fired clothes dryer. Some time later it was discovered a fire had broken out inside the heat chamber of the dryer.

The Fire Brigade attended and extinguished the blaze before it was able to spread. Fortunately the estimated damage was restricted to \$15,000 but had the fire developed it could have been a lot worse.

Urgent Action Required

- Check the pre programmed cool-down time of each dryer. If it is less than 15 minutes, contact the manufacturer and request that it be reprogrammed
- Forbid operators from overriding cool-down times.
- Ensure that staff clean lint trap drums immediately after use.

- Clean behind the dryer where lint can build up
- Clean the dryer vent and exhaust duct periodically
- Ensure that your dryers are regularly serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- Take extra care when drying clothes that have been soaked with volatile chemicals, e.g. Petrol, oils or cleaning agents

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