



Clothes Dryers and Washing Machines Fact Sheet

In 2005, an estimated 14,500 reported U.S. non-confined home* structure fires involving clothes dryers or washing machines (or appliances combining washer and dryer) resulted in an estimated:

- 14 civilian deaths.
- 440 civilian injuries.
- \$207 million in direct property damage.

Leading Items First Ignited in Non-Confined Fires Involving Clothes Washer or Clothes Dryer, 2002-2005

Washer	Fires	Dryer	Fires
Wire or cable insulation	28%	Clothing	30%
Appliance housing or casing	21%	Dust, fiber, or lint	28%
Drive or other belt	19%	Unclassified soft goods or clothing	10%

- Most (82%) non-confined home structure fires involving washers or dryers began in a laundry room or area.
- Most of these home fires involve clothes dryers (92% in 2002-2005).
- The risk of fire is slightly higher for gas-fueled clothes dryers than for electric-powered clothes dryers.
- The leading cause of home clothes dryer and washer fires was failure to clean.

*Homes are dwellings, duplexes, manufactured homes, apartments, townhouses, rowhouses, and condominiums.

Estimates are derived from the U.S. Fire Administration National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) Version 5.0 and NFPA's annual fire department experience survey.