

Soap and static sheets could destroy your clothes dryer.

Last Updated: Thursday, August 13th, 2015, Created: Monday, May 23rd, 2005

It's all about maintenance and one of our viewers had half of a very interesting story.

Burnice writes: "I had a wonderful morning, the heating unit went out of my dryer! Why does everything seem to fall apart this time of year!??? The guy that fixes things went in to the dryer and pulled out the lint filter. It was clean. We always clean the lint from the filter after every load of clothes. He told us that he wanted to show us something. He took the filter over to the sink and ran hot water over it. Now, this thing is like a mesh - I'm sure you know what your dryer's lint filter looks like - WELL.....the hot water just laid on top of the mesh!!! It didn't go through it at all!!!

He told us that dryer sheets cause a film over that mesh and that's what burns out the heating unit. You can't SEE the film, but it's there. He said the best way to keep your dryer working for a very long time (and to keep your electric bill lower) is to take that filter out and wash it with hot soapy water and an old toothbrush (or other brush) at least every six months. He said that makes the life of the dryer at least twice as long! How about that????!!!!

Learn something new everyday!

I certainly didn't know dryer sheets would do that. So, thought I'd share!

I went to the dryer and tested my screen by running water on it. The water collected a little but ran though the screen. I dried it off and was ready to put it back in the dryer since the water ran through it but, I thought what the heck it won't hurt to wash it while I had it out. Warm soap water and a nylon brush and I had done in 30 seconds.

I then ran the water over the screen and what a difference the water just gushed through it with no puddling at all and this time I was running the water at a faster rate. That repairman knew what he was talking about."

Thanks Burnice. I contacted my friend John MacKenzie, my appliance expert and author of Appliance \$ense. He says that "I can't confirm if the dryer sheets can cause blockages, but the screens can block up if excessive soap is used in the washing machine. Some of the excess soap comes out of the clothing in the dryer and plugs up the lint screen. The bottom line is that the tech is correct in saying bad air flow will shorten the drying elements lifespan and cost more to get the clothing dry. The only caution I have is they dry the lint screen after washing to prevent it from rusting, when it is made out of metal screening."

So all of us might want to do a water flow test on our dryer lint screens to see if one or the other of these things may be shortening the life our dryer. If the water does flow better after a soapy cleaning, this should probably become a regular maintenance task for your house..

Keywords:

Filters, Washing Machine, Clogging, Stains, Appliances, Burn, Air Flow, Screen, Cleaning, Fire, Duct, Clothes Dryers, Maintenance