

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 8, 2015  
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 1, 2015  
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 14, 2015  
CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1411**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia**

February 27, 2015

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An act to add and repeal Section 13113.95 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to fire protection.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1411, as amended, Eduardo Garcia. Fire protection: type 1 clothes dryers.

Existing law establishes the Office of the State Fire Marshal in the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and requires the office to foster, promote, and develop ways and means of protecting life and property against fire and panic. Existing law requires the State Fire Marshal to adopt regulations and standards necessary to control the quality and installation of fire alarm systems and devices marketed, distributed, offered for sale, or sold in this state.

This bill would require, on or before December 31, 2016, the State Fire Marshal to work with fire service entities, the appliance industry, disability advocates, and related stakeholders to accomplish certain things, including gathering information, and providing ~~fundings~~ *findings* and recommendations to the Legislature, regarding fires related to type 1 clothes dryers, as defined, and the dangers of excessive lint.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the  
2 following:

3 (a) Fire safety experts identify excess dryer lint as ~~one of the~~  
4 ~~leading causes of a potential contributing factor in~~ residential fires  
5 in California each year.

6 ~~(b) A~~

7 A 2011 report released by the United States Consumer Product  
8 Safety Commission identified fires originating in dryers as nearly  
9 5 percent of all residential fires occurring annually in the country.  
10 ~~Experts widely agree~~ *Some experts believe* that this number is  
11 grossly underestimated, however, because nearly one-half of all  
12 fires that originate in dryers are identified as “electrical fires” rather  
13 than being reported as fires that began in dryers. It is more likely  
14 that 10 percent of all national home fires begin in washers and  
15 dryers.

16 ~~(e)~~

17 (b) The National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) reported  
18 that in 2006-2010, there were 16,950 home structure fires per year  
19 reported to fire departments throughout the country where clothes  
20 dryers or washing machines were the equipment involved in  
21 ignition, with associated annual losses of 34 civilian deaths, 430  
22 civilian injuries, and \$209 million in direct property damage.  
23 Dryers alone accounted for 92 percent of these fires and 87 percent  
24 of the reported deaths. The leading factor contributing to ignition  
25 was failure to clean out the lint buildup.

26 ~~(d) Statistics are not available about the number of home fires~~  
27 ~~in California, specifically, so it is not possible to calculate what~~  
28 ~~percentage of California home fires are caused by lint buildup in~~  
29 ~~dryers. If we consider that 12 percent of the nation’s population~~  
30 ~~are Californians, however, we can imagine the magnitude of~~  
31 ~~California home fires that likely are caused by lint buildup in~~  
32 ~~clothes dryers. These fires are entirely preventable.~~

33 (c) *Across the United States, nearly 70 percent of households*  
34 *own or have access to a clothes dryer. These appliances are relied*  
35 *upon and are used largely without incident. Clothes dryer*  
36 *manufacturers have continually worked to improve safety standards*  
37 *based on new innovations, including work on a recent fire*

1 *containment standard, and will continue to do so to reduce*  
2 *potential risks and further improve consumer safety.*

3 *(d) The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM)*  
4 *has developed a clothes dryer safety brochure titled “Helpful hints*  
5 *for using your clothes dryer safely and effectively,” which has*  
6 *been distributed to more than one million appliance owners in the*  
7 *United States. AHAM makes this important resource available to*  
8 *fire educators and consumers for free.*

9 (e) Lint is a fire hazard. The UL standard, UL2158, specifies  
10 in Section 7.1.2. relating to appliance marking, that an appliance  
11 shall be permanently marked as follows:

12 (1) At or near the exhaust opening of the appliance with the  
13 word “CAUTION” and the following statement or the equivalent:

14  
15 “Risk of Fire. A clothes dryer produces combustible lint. The  
16 dryer must be connected to an exhaust to the outdoors. See  
17 Installation Instructions.”

18  
19 (2) On a surface readily visible to the user after installation of  
20 the appliance with the word “CAUTION” and the following  
21 statement or the equivalent:

22  
23 “Risk of Fire. A clothes dryer produces combustible lint.”

24  
25 ~~(f) Lint is a highly combustible material. When it accumulates~~  
26 ~~in excess in a dryer’s filter, heat from the dryer can cause it to~~  
27 ~~ignite, starting a fire that quickly spreads throughout the house.~~  
28 ~~Keeping the machine clean, and having it regularly serviced, can~~  
29 ~~help prevent a dryer fire, but it is hard to tell when a dangerous~~  
30 ~~amount of lint has built up.~~

31 ~~(g)~~

32 ~~(f) Technology exists may exist today that monitors could~~  
33 ~~indirectly monitor the buildup of highly combustible lint in some~~  
34 ~~locations inside the dryer, and alerts alert consumers when the~~  
35 ~~technology predicts the accumulation reaches dangerous levels~~  
36 ~~and the dryer interior requires servicing. Unfortunately, no~~  
37 ~~regulations or standards currently exist regarding clothes dryers~~  
38 ~~and the notification of the user when dangerous and excessive lint~~  
39 ~~has built up in a clothes dryer.~~

1 ~~(h) Once standards for excessive lint notification systems in~~  
2 ~~clothes dryers are established by the entities that establish the~~  
3 ~~standards, it is the intent of Legislature to seek legislation to adopt~~  
4 ~~the standard and make it a requirement that all dryers sold in~~  
5 ~~California conform to those standards.~~

6 *(g) If standards for excessive lint notification systems in clothes*  
7 *dryers are established, it is the intent of the Legislature to*  
8 *encourage the adoption of the standards and encourage that all*  
9 *dryers sold in California conform to those standards.*

10 SEC. 2. Section 13113.95 is added to the Health and Safety  
11 Code, to read:

12 13113.95. (a) On or before December 31, 2016, the State Fire  
13 Marshal shall work with fire service entities, the appliance industry,  
14 disability advocates, and related stakeholders to accomplish all of  
15 the following:

16 (1) Gather information regarding type 1 clothes dryer-related  
17 fires and the dangers of excessive lint.

18 (2) Provide findings and recommendations to the Legislature,  
19 pursuant to Section 9795 of the Government Code, regarding the  
20 information gathered pursuant to paragraph (1).

21 (3) ~~Encourage all the appropriate clothes dryer fire prevention~~  
22 ~~standard setting entities entity to establish a amend an appropriate~~  
23 ~~voluntary national safety standard regarding the detection of~~  
24 ~~excessive lint and notification of the excessive lint to the consumer.~~  
25 *to improve fire safety, and to include provisions based on any*  
26 *recommendations pursuant to paragraph (2) that will reduce the*  
27 *likelihood of lint-related clothes dryer fires.*

28 (b) For purposes of this section, “type 1 clothes dryer” means  
29 an appliance used in a residential living environment, including  
30 one that is coin-operated for public use in a residential living  
31 environment. “Type 1 clothes dryer” does not include dryers used  
32 for commercial purposes.

33 (c) ~~This repeal~~ section shall remain in effect only until January  
34 1, 2017, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted  
35 statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2017, deletes or extends  
36 that date.