

STAY SAFE WITH SOCIETY



SAFE HANDLING OF FABRIC RAGS AND LINENS

A little-known cause of fires in restaurants, taverns, hotels/motels, factories, and auto repair garages that use and launder fabric towels, linens, and rags is spontaneous ignition. It can occur when clean laundry, such as towels, is put away warm, or when soiled items, such as greasy rags, are stored in open combustible containers. Oxygen causes a chemical reaction to occur that can generate heat sufficient to ignite the combustible towels, linens, and rags. This can even occur in warm, clean laundry stored on shelves.

Prevention Measures:

- In restaurants, taverns, hotels, and motels, it is best to utilize an outside professional laundry service to clean your rags and linens.
- If you choose to launder your own rags, your appliances should be commercial grade and approved for laundering of greasy or oily materials. You can usually determine if the appliance is approved for laundering these materials in the owners manual of the appliance. You should never use residential grade or non-approved appliances for laundering these materials
- Appliances should always be used properly and maintained in good working condition. Enforce a strict preventative maintenance schedule, periodic inspections, and daily vent and lint trap cleaning. Keeping a written log of maintenance items is a good practice.
- Do not leave laundry in the dryer unattended or leave laundry in a dryer for an extended period (i.e., overnight). This can allow heat to build up. Remove laundry from the dryer promptly when the cycle is done.
- Store dirty, greasy rags in a covered metal or noncombustible container, preferably off the floor. Store clean rags separately and away from dirty rags.
- Only use rags and linens designed for your specific use. Dispose of rags and linens when they are excessively soiled, stained or even after laundering the materials leave a greasy sheen on your hands after being handled. Grease or oils will accumulate in the fabric of the rags and linens over time.

**REMOVE LAUNDRY
FROM THE DRYER
PROMPTLY TO PREVENT
HEAT BUILD UP.**

A Small Detail
That Can Make a
Big Difference.

Risk Control Services, riskcontrol@societyinsurance.com

150 Camelot Drive, P.O. Box 1029, Fond du Lac, WI 54936-1029

P. 888.576.2438 | societyinsurance.com

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