

Winter Dryer Problems in Hamilton's Older Brick Homes: Vent, Lint, and Lockwood Diagnostics

Quick reference guide by Max Appliance Repair Hamilton

Why old Hamilton homes are hard on vents

Long routes, multiple bends, exterior brick penetration, original louvered caps, unconditioned basement runs.

What winter does to a vent

Warm wet exhaust condenses on cold duct, lint mats up, exterior flap freezes partly closed.

Five winter symptoms

Two cycles to dry, humid laundry room, cabinet hot to touch, thermal fuse tripping, water dripping from vent run.

DIY check 1: exterior cap

Look from outside. Clear snow and ice. Make sure flaps move freely.

DIY check 2: pull dryer out

Disconnect vent, look inside both ends. Heavy lint mat in first 2 feet means vent cleaning needed.

DIY check 3: test without vent

Run 10 minutes heated, feel airflow at back. Strong = vent problem. Weak = dryer internal issue.

Call right away if

Cabinet hot to touch, thermal fuse tripped twice, burning smell, cycle over 1 hour, vent stuck frozen.

Service call cost

\$180-380 in Hamilton 2026 with parts. Vent-only clean \$140-200.

Permanent fixes

Rigid metal duct, cold-climate damper hood cap, insulate horizontal run. Combined \$300-700.

Cleaning frequency

Annual minimum. Twice yearly for heavy use or allergies. Every winter for pre-1950 brick homes.

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