

Preview of Upcoming Issues

- Commissioning
- Legionella Risk Management

GROWING OUR OFFICE

Scheeser Buckley Mayfield welcomed Sam Pavlik and Xing Liu to our staff as mechanical engineers.

Also, adding to our electrical staff is Mike Kyagaba as electrical engineer.



Perils of Improper Clothes Dryer Venting

Chris J. Schoonover, P.E., LEED AP, CPMP

One challenge that we routinely face on our building designs is how to handle clothes dryers. It is important to coordinate the type of dryer and locations with the entire design team so that the owner's needs are best met. Ideally, all clothes dryers would be located on exterior walls through which we can directly vent, minimizing the cost of the installation. But we know that is not always going to be the case. Regardless of location, makeup air for the dryer(s) needs to be accommodated in our HVAC design which can have major effects on the temperature and pressurization of the space. Section 504 of the International (and Ohio) Mechanical Code outlines the requirements for clothes dryer exhausts and should always be reviewed when planning a new dryer installation.

More than once, we have encountered situations where the location of dryers was not ideal, requiring more advanced methods need to be employed to ensure that the dryer vents are handled properly. The prescriptive venting requirements for residential dryer ductwork in the Code are quite restrictive (35 feet which is reduced by fittings), therefore a dryer installation that is remote will almost always benefit from switching to commercial dryer equipment. Draft assist fans can be employed, but it is important for the owner to understand the increased installation and maintenance costs associated with such systems. Because of the fact that dryer ducts cannot utilize fire or smoke dampers which will build up lint, the path to the outside of the building will typically need to be enclosed by a dedicated fire-rated shaft.

The above photo illustrates the result of an incorrectly vented dryer that we recently upgraded for a client. This is a case where dryers were installed without an engineered design. At best this system was not venting well, increasing energy costs since dryers were not performing optimally, and at worst this system had turned into a serious fire hazard. We corrected the system, with properly sized ductwork and a forced draft fan system.

Scheeser Buckley Mayfield has successfully designed and corrected the operation of numerous clothes dryer installations in a variety of settings such as multi-unit residences, dormitories, sports facilities, schools, hotels, hospitals and performing arts facilities. Please contact one of our mechanical engineers if we can assist with your current or future facility when laundry equipment is involved.



this issue

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