



**Building and Code Services Department**  
**Code Interpretation Number: 6202-02-5**  
**Code Section: 2021 International Mechanical Code Section**  
**504.4 Clothes Dryer Exhaust Installation**

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**Date:** May 21, 2026

**Question:** Can dryer vent guards be used to prevent birds from nesting in dryer ducts?

**Applicable Code Section:** 2021 International Mechanical Code (IMC), Section 504.4, Exhaust Installation.

**Code Analysis and Intent:** Section 504.4 prohibits the installation of screens at the dryer duct termination. The intent of this provision is to prevent restriction of dryer exhaust airflow and to reduce conditions that may promote lint accumulation, blockage, overheating, or other unsafe operating conditions.

This interpretation does not construe IMC Section 504.4 as prohibiting all protective guards at dryer terminations. A guard may be permitted where it is configured in a manner that does not function as a screen, does not materially restrict exhaust airflow, and does not create a condition likely to collect lint or obstruct the duct termination.

**Conclusion:** Dryer vent guards may be permitted in the City of Kyle when used to deter birds or other animals from entering dryer ducts and to prevent the accumulation of nests, nesting materials, or other objectionable materials. Only dryer vent guards that comply with the parameters of this interpretation are permitted.

**Parameters:** Only dryer vent guards with vertically oriented bars will be permitted. Guards with crossing patterns, grid configurations, mesh, screen-type material, or similar obstructions are not permitted.

Vent guards must be installed in accordance with the dryer manufacturer's installation instructions and must not interfere with the required backdraft damper or the proper operation of the dryer exhaust termination.

This interpretation is written in accordance with 2021 International Mechanical Code Section 104.1.

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