

# Improvements in Laundry Machines Is Unending. Introducing Heat Pump Dryers

Over the last 20 years, I have listed many homes on the MLS, and when doing so it's important to list the energy and water-saving appliances of the home in the MLS. Advertising a "high efficiency washer and dryer" became more and more common

But now there are three generations of high efficiency that I can think of.

20 years ago, high efficiency meant front-loading. This reduced the amount of water needed, in comparison to the old top-loading washer. New detergents were introduced for them.

Then, unexpectedly, a top-loading washing machine with no agitator took the title. Who knew that you could clean clothes that way? The washing machine saved water because it sensed the amount of clothes in the machine and adjusted the water use accordingly.

But what about the dryer? Over the years you really could only choose between gas dryers and electric dryers, although I loved to point out the "solar dryer" in the backyard — a clothesline for drying clothes outdoors.

Meanwhile, it has always bothered me how much hot air a dryer exhausts to the outdoors in the dead of winter instead of using that heat inside the house. An analog solution to that is the indoor lint trap shown in this photo. It is filled with water which traps the lint, and the warm air is exhausted into the room. The device is typically used when a vent to the exterior of the house is unavailable, but you might choose to use one because you

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want to capture the dryer's heat instead of sending it outdoors. Remember, too, that the air which your home exhausts must be replaced by outside air coming in through cracks, bathroom/kitchen exhaust piping, etc. So you are not only losing that heat in the winter, you are drawing in cold air from outside.

There are multiple solutions to this dilemma. In addition to using the lint trap described above (in which case you'll want to seal the exhaust pipe to outdoors), you can replace your existing dryer with what's called a condensing dryer, typically using a heat pump instead of gas or traditional resistance-based electrical heating.

A condensing dryer has the ability to keep the heat within your house through internal processing. It's also called a ventless dryer. Google it to learn more and to see where you can buy them (everywhere) and what they cost.

Heat pump dryers use less electricity than conventional dryers because they use an evaporator to remove the moisture and then recycle the warm air so they don't have to heat cooler ambient air again.

Because a heat pump dryer is ductless, you don't have to worry about lint buildup in the vent pipe, which could lead to a fire. There are 13,000 household fires caused by clothes dryers every year in the U.S.

Because heat pump dryers are ductless, they can be installed in any room. Perhaps you'd like to have one in your walk

-in closet or the primary (master) bathroom.

A secondary benefit is that because heat pump dryers operate at a lower temperature, your clothes will last longer.

[TheCoolDown.com](http://TheCoolDown.com) offers other suggestions for saving energy and water, and reducing your personal carbon footprint. The single biggest savings is by using cold water unless absolutely necessary.

Also, dryer sheets and fabric softeners, they say, work by adding petroleum-based chemicals to your clothing, which can cause eczema. Dryer balls are a one-time purchase

that work better. (We use them.)

We buy detergent in gallon-size plastic jugs, but they suggest buying powder instead since it's questionable whether that jug, made from petroleum, will be recycled, even if you put it in the your recycling cart.

## CEFF Offers 2 Earth Day Films

The Colorado Environmental Film Festival is celebrating Earth Day with two films: **The Engine Inside** (about bicycling) tonight, April 18; and **Deep Rising** (about seabed mining) on April 21. Ticket info is at <https://ceff.net/earth-day>.

## Real Estate Activity Has Surged Since Jan. 1st

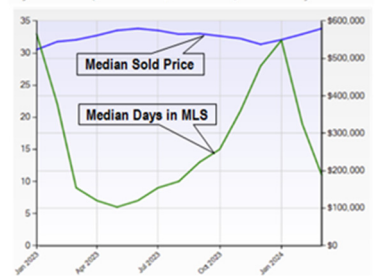
For most of 2023, the number of closed transactions fell while the number of active listings surged until some of them either expired or were taken off the market for the holidays. Starting in January there was a marked increase in sales, combined with more sellers putting their homes on the market.

The charts at right are from Denver's MLS and cover the 15-month period from January 2023 through March 2024 for REcolorado listings only, limited to a 20-mile radius of downtown Denver.

The second chart shows how sharply the median days a listing was active on the MLS rose through most of last year, peaking at over 30 days in January but plummeting, just like last year, in February and March. Meanwhile, the median sold price, which had been slumping slightly during the last half of 2023, turned sharply upward in January, February and March.

From studying current MLS data, this trend is continuing in April.

Of course, the real estate market varies greatly from city to city and from neighborhood to neighborhood. If you'd like to monitor the market in your city or your specific



subdivision, any of our broker associates or I could create what we call a "Neighborhood Alert" for you. You define the area you want to monitor, and we program the MLS to send you an email notification every time a home in that area is listed, goes under contract, sells or expires. With our help, you'll be the neighborhood expert where you live — or perhaps in a neighborhood where you want to buy. Call us; our phone numbers are below.

## If You're Thinking of Renovating a Home Built Before 1980, Consider Possible Presence of Asbestos

You'd be amazed how many older building materials included asbestos. If you disturb asbestos, making it airborne, you endanger the health of yourself, your workers and your children.

Because asbestos doesn't burn, it was used to wrap pipes and ductwork in older homes, and in other less obvious materials. If your home has popcorn ceilings which you want to remove, you should definitely test for asbestos first.

Asbestos is also present in older adhesives used with vinyl flooring. Older gas fireplaces had inserts made of asbestos. It is also found in older roof shingles and siding, in certain Chinese drywall boards, in vermiculite insulation, and in some ceiling tiles.

Although asbestos materials are safe when left alone, disturbing them can be hazardous. See <http://RealEstateToday.substack.com> for useful links on this topic.



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"Concentrate on giving, and the getting will take care of itself." —Anonymous