



A Property Owners Guide to best defense practices against common risks.

# Bathroom Exhaust Fans: A Critical Safety Component

Your bathroom exhaust fan may seem like a silent hero, but its role in preventing potential risks shouldn't be overlooked. By spending a few moments with your bathroom fan, you can uncover critical details about its condition, and most importantly, protect your property from potential dangers. Here's how to make sure your bathroom exhaust fan is keeping your home safe

### Understanding the Risk:

The 3 most common causes of bathroom exhaust fan fires are:<sup>1</sup>

- 1. Faulty wiring
- 2. Running it for extended periods of time
- 3. Failing to clean & maintain the fan

Accumulated dust, lint, and debris in exhaust fans can lead to overheating and pose a serious fire risk.

Bathroom exhaust fans are typically used during bathroom usage, however, sometimes they are left on for extended periods to clear humidity and/or fumes out of a space... often times they are left unattended during these periods.

When a fan fails, it can cause the dust to ignite and quickly cause a fire which spreads to the structural materials, leading to a large loss. This can also happen with other exhaust fans which can be found in the kitchen, laundry rooms, and attic spaces.

### What to look for:

**Sight:** Just looking at a fan can tell us a lot about it's safety. Doing a visual inspection annually for dust buildup & clearing it will help improve its efficiency and reduce the risk.

Check for dark spots or discoloration in the insulation, which can tell you that overheating may be occurring.

Also, if the fan appears to be old, it may be time to replace it. Experts recommend replacing them every 10 years.<sup>2</sup>

**Sounds:** Loud, scraping, squeaking, or any other new sound that comes out of the fan should be quickly inspected by a professional and / or replaced.

### Property Owner's Responsibility:

- Maintenance: Regular maintenance helps prevent costly repairs and potential loss of property.

### Reducing the Risk:

- Remove build up of dust on a annual basis
- Install a timer switch
- Replace fans every 10 years
- Install a vent fan with thermal heat protection
- Share this information with your tenants

Regular and thorough maintenance of bathroom exhaust fans is a crucial safety measure that property owners should prioritize to protect their property and its occupants.

Sources:  
 1 <https://forstconsultingllc.com/blog/bathroom-exhaust-fan-dangers/>  
 2 <https://harrison-electric.com/Blog/entryid/237/5-signs-its-time-to-replace-your-bathroom-exhaust-fan>

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)  
Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

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