

Hot Water Heater Energy Usage

Approximately 15% of the energy used in the average household is used to heat hot water for showers, baths, dishwashing and clothes washing. There are many common sense ways that the energy used to heat hot water can be reduced. Most of these do not require any substantial capital expenditure and do not significantly affect the household lifestyle.

Low-cost ways to reduce energy consumption

- 1) Set the thermostat to 115 degrees. If the heater volume (gallons) is sized right this temperature will provide ample hot water.
- 2) On older heaters add an insulation blanket to the outside of the heater. On newer better insulated hot water heaters check with the manufacturer to see if this is permitted.
- 3) Insulate the hot and cold water line at least 10 feet back from the tank and install a heat trap on the outlet of the hot water outlet line.
- 4) At least every three months use the blow down drain at the bottom of the tank to flush sediments from the bottom of the tank.
- 5) Install low flow faucets and showerheads.
- 6) Take more showers than baths but limit your shower to five minutes. Consider turning off the shower when soaping up to conserve water and energy.
- 7) Operate clothes washers and dishwashers only when full.
- 8) Fix and repair all faucet and pipe leaks promptly.
- 9) On gas hot water heaters have the burners cleaned and combustion adjusted for efficiency at least every three years.
- 10) Install a water heater timer to shut the heater off during periods when the heater will not be used and turn it back before known high use periods.



Equipment upgrades to reduce hot water energy consumption

- 1) Replace the electric hot water heater with either a model with higher insulation value (R13-R19) or a model that acquires its thermal energy from a highly efficient heat pump.
- 2) Replace the gas hot water heater with a high efficient condensing type hot water heater that has electronic burner ignition.
- 3) If the location of the home is in a hot sunny climate utilize a solar water heater that is also environmentally friendly. Most of these units have an electric element backup for cloudy days.
- 4) In large homes consider using point of use instant hot water heaters. These units save energy because there is not a large tank of hot water to be maintained and there are no line losses.

If you would like additional energy savings tips, please see our energy efficiency section at www.vectren.com or contact us by e-mail at marketinginfo@vectren.com.