



**E-Conservation**  
power to control what you spend

# Energy Efficiency Advisor

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

NC COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION  
Empowering People • Promoting Solutions

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## Saving Money and Water

We use energy in treating, transporting, and heating water. Every drop extra that you use affects your wallet. The following tips will help you save on water and energy costs:

**Lower your water heater temperature**  
Most water heaters are set at 140°F. This high setting is only needed if you have a dishwasher without a booster heater. To save six to 10 percent on your water-heating costs, turn the temperature down to 120°F (medium setting on a gas heater dial). Most electric heaters have both an upper and a lower thermostat to adjust.

**Insulate your water heater**  
If your water heater is located in an unheated location, such as a garage or attic, wrapping the tank in a blanket of glass fiber insulation. This action can help reduce heat loss by as much as 25 to 45 percent, resulting in a cost savings of four to nine percent on your water-heating bill. Water heater insulation kits are available at your local hardware store or through your utility company. Insulation wraps and blankets are most appropriate for older water heaters and those located in unheated areas. Some manufacturers do not recommend an insulation wrap for newer water heaters.

**Safety tip:** when adding insulation to your water heater, be sure to follow the installation directions. It is important not to block exhaust vents and air intakes on gas models, and thermostat access panels on electric heaters with insulation. If you have questions, concerns, or doubts about proper installation, contact a plumber for assistance.

**Replace your shower head**  
A standard showerhead uses up to eight gallons of hot water per minute. Replacing your showerhead with a quality low-flow

## In This Month's Issue:

Saving Money and Water

WaterSense Leabel

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showerhead will allow you to use only one to two gallons of water per minute. Newer low-flow showerheads are able to maintain water pressure, while using significantly less water. Low-flow showerheads typically pay for themselves within a year. With low-flow showerheads you can save twice—both on your electric or gas bill and on your water use bill.

#### Wash clothes in cold water

About 90 percent of the energy used by washing machines goes toward water heating. Often, using hot water is unnecessary except for special loads such as diapers or stained work clothes. To save on energy costs, try washing in cold water, using cold water detergents, and wash full loads whenever possible. To save even more, on sunny days, use the clothesline instead of the dryer to dry your laundry.



#### WaterSense Label

As a consumer, sometimes it is difficult to decipher the various labels we find on building products. When looking at energy efficient appliances, we have come to know and trust the EnergyStar label. When it comes to water saving products, the WaterSense label provides an added assurance that the product is indeed water-efficient. WaterSense, is a partnership program of the EPA that "seeks to protect the future of our nation's water supply by offering people a simple way to use less water with water-efficient products, new homes, and services" (EPA, 2015).

This label can be found on faucets, toilets, showerheads, and more. Those products that have the label:

- *Perform as well or better than their less efficient counterparts.*
- *Are 20 percent more water efficient than average products in that category.*



- *Realize water savings on a national level.*
- *Provide measurable water savings results.*
- *Achieve water efficiency through several technology options.*
- *Are effectively differentiated by the WaterSense label.*
- *Obtain independent, third-party certification.*

source: EPA

So, look for this label the next time you are in the market for water saving devices.

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