

STOP THE HOT WATER DRAIN!

HOW YOU CAN KEEP YOUR ENERGY BILLS DOWN WHILE STILL GETTING YOUR DISHES, CLOTHES AND FAMILY SPARKLING CLEAN

If you're like most British Columbians, the amount of energy you use to heat water for dish washing, laundry, baths and showers is second only to the amount you use to heat your rooms—which means water heating makes up a hefty chunk of your monthly energy bills.

But there are a number of simple, no-cost or low-cost measures you can take to cut down on what you pay to heat your hot water, without sacrificing either cleanliness or comfort. And when your current heater needs to be replaced, you can also look at installing a new, more energy-efficiency heater for your home.

NO- AND LOW-COST WAYS TO SAVE

STAY OUT OF HOT WATER

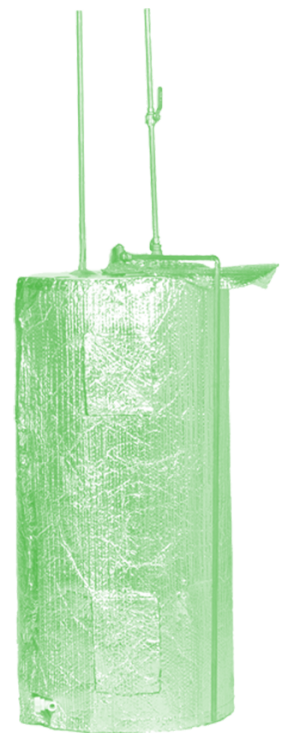
One of the best ways to save energy is to use less hot water. It's easy, too: simply take shorter showers, turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth, wash your clothes in cold water (they will come out just as clean) and fix any leaky faucets. For even more savings, install water-saving, low-flow showerheads and aerating faucets, and consider buying an ENERGY STAR® clothes washer.

GIVE YOUR TANK A HUG

If you have an older electric hot water heater (pre-2000), you may need to wrap it in an insulating blanket to help reduce heat loss. To tell whether your tank could use a hug, place your hand on the outside of it. If the tank feels warm, it is losing heat and needs to be wrapped. You can find pre-cut, easy-to-install blankets at most home supply stores. (Insulation blankets are available for gas hot water heaters too, but they should be installed by a professional to ensure they don't slip or interfere with the pilot light.)

PAD YOUR PIPES

Covering your water pipes where you can see them with 12-millimeter (1/2-inch) fibreglass or foam insulation is a good idea no matter what kind of water heater you have. Not only will insulated pipes reduce your heat loss, you won't have to wait as long for hot water when you turn on a faucet or showerhead.



TAKE YOUR TANK'S TEMPERATURE

Your water heater should be set to a minimum of 55°C and a maximum of 60°C. The proper temperature will keep your water safe and free from bacteria, while making sure you do not waste energy. It will also reduce mineral build-up and corrosion, so your tank will last longer and operate better. Consult your water heater owner's manual for instructions about checking and, if necessary, lowering your tank's temperature.

Another tip: Check the manual for instructions on draining a dishpan full of water from the clean-out valve at the bottom of your hot water tank. This can help prevent or reduce the build-up of sediment.

GREATER COST/GREATER SAVINGS

INSTALL AN ENERGY-EFFICIENT WATER HEATER

When it's time to replace your current water heater, consider a high efficiency model. These include:

- Solar water heaters. Solar water heaters change sunlight into heat, using solar collectors mounted on the roof.
- Heat pump water heaters. Heat pump water heaters do the same job as standard electric water heaters, but may save as much as half the energy.
- Tankless water heaters. Best for homes with natural gas, tankless water heaters provide hot water on demand, without using a storage tank.

GET ADVICE

Because there are so many different water heater options available today—and because each house and family is different—we suggest you consult a qualified plumber for advice on what will best meet your needs. In addition to energy efficiency, you'll want to consider recovery time (how long it takes the heater to return to hot after the last use), fuel type (gas or electric, for example) and cost.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about energy-efficient water heaters or more energy-saving tips, call or visit:

Lower Mainland: 604 431 9463
Elsewhere in BC: 1 877 431 9463
bchydro.com/powersmart