

## Energy Saving Tips

from the MSU Extension Housing and  
Environmental Health Program



# Efficient hot water heating keeps energy bills cooler

One of the easiest ways to save money on home energy is to turn down the temperature setting on your hot water heater. For each 10 degrees, you can save up to five percent of your water heating cost.

If you have a gas heater, look for the knob near the bottom of the tank to adjust the water temperature. Begin by marking the current setting with a permanent marker. That way, you can always return the setting to where you started. Most heaters are set at 140 degrees or higher, but a setting of 120 degrees is adequate to provide plenty of hot water for most households. If there are no temperature markings on the control knob, set the control between the low and medium setting.

If you have an electric heater, be sure to turn off the electricity to the heater before making any adjustments. There are two elements that you will need to adjust. After turning off the power, remove the access plates and adjust the settings.

Unless prohibited by the manufacturer, you can add a special insulation blanket to your water heater. Kits are available and can save nearly ten percent of your water heating bills. Be sure to follow the directions, taping the blanket securely to the tank and using straps to further secure it. On a gas water heater, never cover the top, never cover the exhaust vent or the air intake, and keep the bottom of the insulation at least three inches above the burner area. On electric water heaters, you can cover the top as long as you don't obstruct the pressure/temperature relief valve.

While you're at the hardware store, pick up ten feet of foam insulation. Place this on the first 5 feet of the hot and cold water lines closest to the water heater. Keep the insulation away from the hot vent and any flammable sources.

**For free information and energy saving tips, contact the MSU Extension Housing and Environmental Health Program at (406) 994-3451. To download free energy brochures, go to [www.weatherization.org/energytopics.htm](http://www.weatherization.org/energytopics.htm)**



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