

## Hot Water

### Why we care

Within your home, heating water is the second biggest contributor of carbon emissions after space heating. Because about 20 percent of all carbon emissions come from homes, reducing energy for hot water can make a positive environmental impact, and it will save you money.

### Simple, positive change

#### Common sense steps

- Set your water heater for 120° (or between “low” and “medium”).
- [Wrap insulation](#) around your water heater if it feels warm to the touch. [Wrap your hot water pipes](#).
- Turn off the heater if you will be away for two or more days.
- Assure that you have a low-flow (less than 2 ½ quarts of water in 15 seconds) shower head. +

#### Lifestyle changes

- Reducing a 10-minute shower to five minutes saves more electricity than almost any other lifestyle change.
- Set washing machine temperature at “warm” or “cold” for wash and “cold” for rinse, and wait until you have a full load.

#### Technological solutions

- Replace a conventional washing machine with a front-loading Energy Star model.
- Look into a [solar hot water system](#), which qualifies for a 30% federal [tax credit](#).
- Replace an old water heater with a high efficiency electric heater.
- If hot water takes a long time to reach your shower or sink, consider a demand circulating pump that quickly cycles the cool water standing in the hot water pipes back to the water heater, bringing hot water to the tap. Note that this saves water but uses more energy.

**Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at [jeanne@earthleaders.org](mailto:jeanne@earthleaders.org).**