

Facts About Clothes Washers and Dryers

A typical family doing about 400 loads of laundry, can spend between \$200 to \$300 per year washing and drying clothes at home.*

Doing laundry shouldn't put a wrinkle in your household energy budget. Here are some easy ways to save energy – and money – when doing your laundry.

Saving energy saves money and helps protect the environment. If you're in the market for a new washer or dryer, check our guidelines for buying an energy-efficient model.

Clothes Washer

- ▶ **Wash full loads** – The same amount of electricity is used whether washing a partial or full load. To get the most for your money, wash full loads.
- ▶ **Adjust water level** – If you only have a partial load of laundry to wash, lower the water level to match the size of the load.
- ▶ **Wash in cold water** – Washing your clothes in cold water rather than warm or hot water whenever possible can get your clothes just as clean and help lower your energy costs. Most laundry detergents are formulated to clean just as well at cold temperatures.
- ▶ **Check your connections** – Replace cracked hoses and fix leaky faucet connections.

Clothes Dryer

- ▶ **Dry full loads** – Running your dryer for 30 minutes costs the same whether you have one shirt or a whole load of laundry in it. So, it's more economical to dry full loads. Don't pack your dryer though, because clothes need breathing room to tumble.
- ▶ **Clean the lint screen** – Clean your dryer's lint screen before starting each load. A clean lint trap allows air to circulate more freely, which helps your dryer work more efficiently.



- ▶ **Don't over-dry your clothes** – Over-drying your clothes can make them stiff, wrinkled, difficult to iron and wastes energy.
- ▶ **Clean the machine** – Periodically remove any buildup of lint and dust from the dryer exhaust, the back of the dryer and behind the lint screen. A blocked exhaust duct can be a fire hazard.
- ▶ **Exhaust properly** – Connect the dryer's exhaust duct to the outside terminal, using the straightest and shortest duct possible. Manufacturers recommend that dryer exhausts be made of rigid sheet metal or corrugated semi-rigid sheet metal, not coiled-wire foil or plastic material.
- ▶ **Replace leaky exhaust terminals** – Check the outside dryer exhaust terminal to make sure it closes as it was designed to do and is not blocked with lint.

Clothes Washer Shopping Tips

Here are some tips to help you make an energy-smart decision when you're shopping for a new washing machine.

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Choose clothes washer features that have:

- ▶ Temperature controls, so you can choose cold-water settings.
- ▶ Water level controls, so you can use less water for small loads.
- ▶ A pre-soaking option, to help clothes get clean with a shorter wash cycle.
- ▶ A high-speed spin cycle for better water removal and reduced drying time.

Look for the ENERGY STAR® label

ENERGY STAR® labeled models meet strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and cost less to operate than standard models because they:

- ▶ Use about 30% less energy.
- ▶ Use over 50% less water than regular washers.
- ▶ Remove more water from clothes, which reduces drying time.

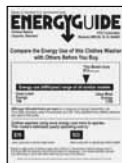
For a typical household, an ENERGY STAR-qualified washer could save about 7,000 gallons of water per year. Calculations based on nearly 400 loads of laundry washed in an ENERGY STAR washer (18-25 gallons per full load) compared to conventional washer (40 gallons per full load).

Consider a horizontal-axis (front-loading) model

Consider buying a “front-loading” model. It uses less energy, water and detergent, and has a faster spin cycle for reduced clothes-drying time and costs.

Compare EnergyGuide ratings

All new clothes washers come with an EnergyGuide label. This bright yellow-and-black label is mandated by the federal government and helps you determine the appliance’s annual operating costs. The smaller the number, the less energy it uses and the more money you save.



Calculate the true cost

Clothes washers last an average of 14 years, so it pays to consider both the purchase price and the cost of operating and maintaining the machine during its lifetime. ENERGY STAR washers may cost more to purchase, but you quickly make up the difference in long-term energy and water savings.

Clothes Dryer Shopping Tips

Here are some tips that can help you make an energy-smart decision when shopping for a new clothes dryer.

Confirm the connections

Before comparing gas versus electric clothes dryers, check to see whether your laundry room has the right connections. A gas dryer requires a gas hook-up and a 120-volt electric outlet. Electric dryers require a 240-volt outlet.

Savings can add up for gas dryers

Gas dryers are generally cheaper to operate than electric, even though electric dryers typically have cheaper purchase prices. However, the energy savings from a gas dryer can easily offset the initial price difference in a couple of years.

Choose dryer features that have:

- ▶ A moisture sensor that automatically shuts off the machine as soon as your clothes are dry.
- ▶ A “permanent-press” cycle or a cool-down period.

New dryers improved

Consider replacing your old dryer with a new one. Newer dryers have better insulation and use much less energy.

Please note: Clothes dryers do not have EnergyGuide or ENERGY STAR labels because there’s little difference in energy use from model to model.

For More Information

At SDG&E® we’re committed to helping our customers save energy and money. If you’d like more information on energy efficiency, visit sdge.com or call us toll-free at **1-800-644-6133**.

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