



E-Conservation

power to control what you spend

Save money, water, and energy by using dishwasher wisely

With drought decreasing water supplies and energy costs rising nationwide, consumers are more aware of how their appliances use these precious resources. Using or buying a dishwasher wisely can save money, water, and energy. Using your dishwasher efficiently also contributes to a cleaner environment by reducing air pollution from excessive energy use.

To conserve water, be sure that the dishwasher is full, but not overloaded, when it is run. When loading the dishwasher, scrape off large pieces of food or bone – don't rinse them off. Soak or prewash dishes only when there is burned-on or dried-on food. Also, because the "rinse hold" setting on your machine can use three to seven gallons of hot water per use, don't use this setting for only a few dishes.

To conserve energy, another setting to avoid is "heat dry" – let the dishes air dry. Water temperature offers another way to conserve energy. Check the manufacturer's recommendations – many models have internal heating elements (booster heaters) that enable the home water heater to be set to a lower temperature (120°F), while ensuring that dishes are properly cleaned. Reducing water and energy use lowers utility bills.

If you are in the market for a new dishwasher, look for the Energy Star label. Energy Star is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy; the Energy Star logo indicates that an appliance has met the program's strict energy efficiency standards.

Replacing a dishwasher manufactured before 1994 with an Energy Star model can save more than \$30 per year in utility costs. Energy Star dishwashers use at least 41 percent less energy than the federal minimum standard for energy consumption. Also, Energy Star-qualified dishwashers use much less water than conventional models, which will make a big difference in the cost of your water bill.

When shopping for a new dishwasher, compare the Energy Guide labels of different models. The smaller the amount of energy used in kilowatt hours (kWh) per year, the smaller amount of energy the appliance will require. Similarly, the fewer gallons of water the machine uses per cycle, the less it costs to operate. Look for features labeled "smart controls" or "smart cycles" – many of these sensors help conserve water and energy.

With a new or existing dishwasher, being mindful of energy and water usage can help to reduce energy usage, lower utility bills, and preserve resources. For more energy conservation tips for your home, contact your local Cooperative Extension Office.

Additional resources:

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=dishwasher.pr_dishwashers
<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/dishwashers.html>

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