

120° is plenty for both dishwashers and washing machines

With today's detergents, washing machines work just as well at 120°F as at higher settings. Some dishwashers heat water to higher temperatures, if needed. Clothes get clean in warm, or even cold water.

Make sure hot water heater controls are adjusted to a moderate level – a setting no higher than 120°F.



Did You Know?

For children's baths, make certain the water temperature is lower than 100°F. Run cold water in the tub before the hot water. Gradually add the hot water until the tub is a safe temperature. This will prevent a scald burn if a child falls into the tub while it is being filled.

Before placing a child in the tub, check the temperature of the water with your elbow. If the water feels hot on the sensitive skin of your elbow, it is too hot for the child.

Contacts

MONTANA

Customer Contact Center (888) 467-2669
E+ Audit/E+ Energy Survey (800) 823-5995

NEBRASKA

Customer Contact Center (800) 245-6977

SOUTH DAKOTA

Customer Contact Center (800) 245-6977
E+ Audit (800) 823-5995

NorthWestern Energy offers a variety of safety educational resources and programs. Visit our website for more details.

Don't forget our online Energy Efficiency Tools – You may be surprised at what is available to help you make smart energy saving decisions. Visit www.NorthWesternEnergy.com for more great tips and ideas to help you with your home energy improvement projects. Look for the  tools on our website.

NorthWestern
Energy

www.NorthWesternEnergy.com/Eplus



Form No. 3338 01/15



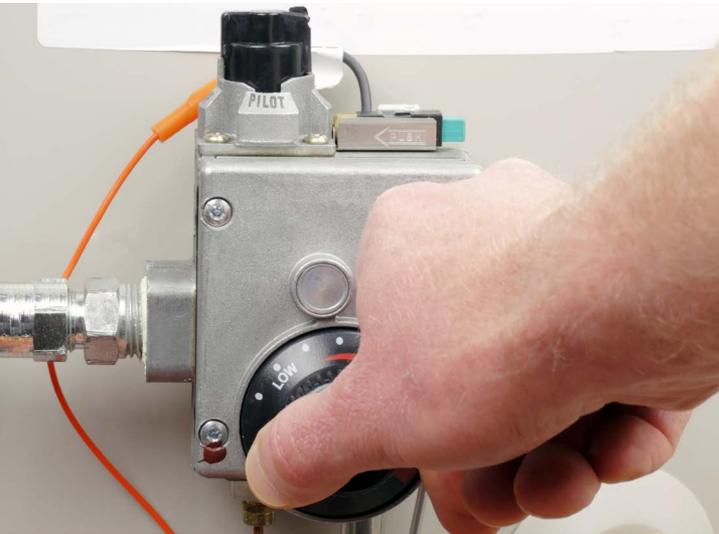
120° Is Plenty

NorthWestern
Energy

Delivering a Bright Future

Introduction

Although some manufacturers set water heater thermostats at 140°F, most households usually only require them to be set at 120°F. Water heated at 140°F not only wastes energy, it also poses a severe safety hazard – scalding. Scalding water burns don't have to happen – but they do, according to accident statistics from the National Safety Bureau. Each year, for example, 37,000 children are treated for scald burns in the United States. Nearly every one of these accidents could have been prevented with some simple precautions.



When it Comes to Hot Water Heaters...

DON'T BE AVERAGE! You may only be a few seconds away from a burn that can result in a scarring disability, or even death. Water at 150°F causes the worst kind of burn (third degree) in 1.5 seconds or less. While at 120°F, it takes four minutes for a severe burn. In the average household, the water heater temperature is set at “medium” or about 140°F or higher. Turn your water heater down to the moderate level of 120°F.

Scalding risks are dangerous to everyone

Anyone can be a scalding victim when water temperatures are too high. Senior citizens, infants, toddlers and persons with mental or physical disabilities are more likely to suffer these painful burns. But the sad truth is all of us are possible burn victims. And, in most cases, it does not have to happen.

Check your thermostat

Consult your water heater owner's manual for instructions on how to operate the thermostat. You can find a thermostat dial for a gas storage water heater near the bottom of the tank on the gas valve. Electric water heaters, on the other hand, may have thermostats positioned behind screw-on plates or panels. As a safety precaution, shut off the electricity to the water heater before removing/opening the panels. Keep in mind that an electric water heater may have two thermostats – one each for the upper and lower heating elements.

You should check the temperature of water in your home by letting the hot water run three to five minutes. Then insert a candy thermometer into a cup of the water. If the temperature is higher than 120°F, the water heater thermostat or control valve should be turned down to a lower temperature. Mark the beginning temperature and the adjusted temperature on the thermostat dial for future reference. After turning it down, check the water temperature with a thermometer at the tap farthest from the water heater. Thermostat dials are often inaccurate. Several adjustments may be necessary before you get the right temperature.

If you plan to be away from home for three days or more, turn the thermostat down to the lowest setting or completely turn off the water heater. To turn off an electric water heater, switch off the circuit breaker to it. For a gas water heater, make sure you know how to safely re-light the pilot light before turning it off.



Lower your water heating temperature for safety and energy savings

After heating and cooling, water heating is typically the largest energy user in the home because it is necessary for so many domestic activities.

You can reduce your water heating costs by simply lowering the thermostat setting on your water heater. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, for each 10°F reduction in water temperature, you can save between three to five percent in energy costs.

Reducing your water temperature to 120°F also slows mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes. This helps your water heater last longer and operate at its maximum efficiency. If you're replacing a worn-out existing water heater or looking for the best model for a new house you're building, it pays to choose carefully.

Often you can substantially reduce your energy use simply through water conservation.