



The Virgin Island Energy Office

Telephone 773.1082 www.vienergy.org

Getting the Facts on Laundry

About 90% of the energy used for washing clothes is for heating the water. There are two ways to reduce the amount of energy used for washing clothes—use less water and use cooler water. Unless you're dealing with oily stains, the warm or cold water setting does fine.

Laundry Tips

- Wash your clothes in cold water using cold-water detergents whenever possible.
- Wash and dry full loads. If you are washing a small load, use the appropriate water-level setting.
- Dry towels and heavier cottons in a separate load from lighter-weight clothes.
- Don't over-dry your clothes. If your machine has a moisture sensor, use it.
- Clean the lint filter in the dryer after every load to improve air circulation.
- Use the cool-down cycle to allow the clothes to finish drying with the residual heat in the dryer.
- Periodically inspect your dryer vent to ensure it is not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent a fire. Manufacturers recommend using rigid venting material, not plastic vents that may collapse and cause blockages.
- Consider air-drying clothes on clothes lines or drying racks. Air-drying is recommended by clothing manufacturers for some fabrics.
- \$ Long-Term Savings Tip: Look for the ENERGY STAR® and EnergyGuide labels. ENERGY STAR clothes washers clean clothes using 50% less energy than standard washers. Most full-sized ENERGY STAR washers use 18-25 gallons of water per load, compared to the 40 gallons used by a standard machine. ENERGY STAR models also spin the clothes better, resulting in less drying time.
- \$ Long-Term Savings Tip: When shopping for a new clothes dryer, look for one with a moisture sensor that automatically shuts off the machine when your clothes are dry. Not only will this save energy, it will save wear and tear on your clothes caused by over-drying.
- \$ Long-Term Savings Tip: ENERGY STAR does not label clothes dryers because most of them use similar amounts of energy, which means there is little difference in energy use between models.