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Tackling Your Laundry: Let's talk machines!

The low down on energy-efficient laundry equipment

Traditional washers

Chances are the type of washer you have is a top-loading, traditional “agitator” washer. In 2005, 85 percent of washers purchased in the United States were traditional washers. In these washers, laundry is completely submerged in water and an agitator moves the items back and forth to loosen soils.

High efficiency (HE) washers

Most HE washers use a “tumbler” system with no agitator. HE washers use low-water wash and rinse cycles. Despite their reduced water levels, HE washers can wash the same amount of laundry per load as traditional washers. In fact, many may clean even larger loads. Front-loading and top-loading HE washer can be purchased. Although both work differently, they both use considerably less water than traditional agitator washers.

Energy savings at-a-glance

- HE washers use 20-60 percent less water than traditional washers.
- Energy use can be as little as 20 to 50 percent of that used by traditional washers because there is less water to heat.
- The savings translate directly to long-term cost savings and long-term environmental benefits.

*Look for the
Energy Star*

*Energy
Star®
washers use
superior
designs that
require less
water to get
clothes
thoroughly
clean.*

Clothes dryers

A dryer evaporates water from the clothing and minimizes wrinkling by tumbling clothes. Water evaporation requires heat — large amounts of it. Heating costs money, but there are different ways to use the dryer to make it more economical to operate.

Most dryers have at least three heat settings. These settings include:

- Air Fluff (no heat)
- Delicate (low heat)
- Regular (high heat)

Follow these suggestions to operate the dryer more



economically:

- Extract as much water as possible from clothes prior to placing in the dryer (HE washers use less water, so less water is on clothes when transporting to dryer.)
- Sort dryer loads by fabric and set temperatures by fabric.
- Do not overload dryer.
- Clean lint filter after each load.
- Check and clean outside vent monthly.

Energy Star

When considering the cost of your washer and dryer, think beyond the purchase price. Look for the Energy Star®. Consider energy and water cost over the lifetime of the appliance. The average life of a washing machine is 12 years, while the average life of a dryer is 13-14 years.

References

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Energy Star at <https://www.energystar.gov/about/>

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