

# 10 tips to save energy on laundry day

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**The average household does about 400 loads of laundry a year. This common chore provides a good opportunity to use energy more wisely to save on monthly electric bills.**

The electric cost of each load of laundry is about 66 to 87 cents, depending on the cycle, adding up to hundreds of dollars in energy costs each year.

"Washing and drying laundry uses more electricity than you may think. Not only are you running the machines, many times you are also using warm or hot water, which is typically heated using electricity in Florida," says Progress Energy Florida efficiency expert Malcolm Barnes, manager of field operations for Demand Side Management. "Simple changes to the way you do laundry can add up to significant savings over time."

Progress Energy Florida offers 10 simple tips that can help you save electricity and money on wash day:

1. **Do full loads.** Only wash full loads to maximize the efficiency of your machine. But, be careful not to overload the machine, which can make it harder to get clothes clean.
2. **Use cold water.** Most of the energy used in washing machines is to heat water. Switch to cold water wash cycles with compatible detergent and you can save up to 50 cents per load.
3. **Reset the water heater.** Set your water heater to 120 degrees instead of 140 and you could save up to \$85 a year in energy costs for all your water heating needs, not just on laundry day.
4. **Clean the lint filter.** A clogged filter can dramatically reduce a dryer's efficiency. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that if you clean the lint trap with every load you can save up to \$34 each year.
5. **Use the energy-saving settings on both the washer and dryer.** For example, a faster spin in the washer will reduce how long the clothes will need to be in the dryer. In the dryer, use a cycle that includes a cool-down period, sometimes known as a "permanent press" cycle. In the last few minutes of this cycle, cool air – not heated air – is blown through the clothes, completing the drying process with less electricity and saving you money.
6. **Don't over dry clothes.** Dry loads of similar fabrics together so the entire load dries just as the cycle ends. A dryer operating an extra 15 minutes on each load to dry that one bulky towel mixed in with lightweight shirts can waste more than \$30 of electricity a year. And, over drying causes additional wear and tear on your garments.
7. **Do at least two loads.** Dry two or more loads in a row to take advantage of the retained heat in the dryer.
8. **Consider a clothesline or drying rack.** Drying clothes outside on a line or inside on a drying rack saves about 40 cents per load. That savings can add up to \$160 a year for an average household. Plus, line-dried clothes receive less wear and tear and will be static free without the use of dryer sheets – resulting in more savings. And, Florida is one of a handful of states where homeowner associations cannot ban the use of clotheslines.
9. **Put it off.** Consider using items more than once before throwing them into the laundry basket. Jeans, towels and sweaters can often skip a wash, cutting down on the overall amount of laundry.
10. **Buy efficient machines, when replacing.** Look for ENERGY STAR–certified, high-efficiency washing machines when it is time to replace your unit. These models cut related energy costs by about a third and water costs by more than half. Replacing a 10-year-old washer with a new, ENERGY STAR-qualified model can save up to \$135 each year on your utility bills. A dryer is typically the second-biggest electricity-using appliance after the refrigerator, costing about \$85 to operate annually. When shopping for a new dryer, look for energy-saving features such as a moisture sensor that automatically shuts off the dryer when your clothes are dry.

To learn more ways to save, sign up for a Progress Energy Florida Home Energy Check. Through this no-cost service, which is available online, over the phone or in person, a highly trained Energy Advisor will provide customized, energy-saving advice specific to your home. Participating in a Home Energy Check is also the only way to determine your eligibility for valuable company rebates toward energy-efficient improvements.

To sign up for a no-cost Progress Energy Florida Home Energy Check and to learn more than 100 energy-saving tips, visit [SaveTheWatts.com](http://SaveTheWatts.com) or call 1.877.364.9003.

