

↓ Kilowatt CountdownLaundry Room Checklist

Clothes Washing

- Wash in cold water. Heating water uses up to 90% of a washer's energy (*Ministry of Energy*). Hot water uses 6.5 kWh, while cold uses .4 kWh per load. Cold-water laundry detergents may be needed for cold-water washes. Reserve hot water for very dirty loads and use a cold rinse. Just rinsing clothes in cold water saves energy.
- Use the lowest water setting possible.
- If clothes are extra dirty, pre-soak them instead of washing them twice.

Reprinted from Rocky Mountain Institute:

Electricity Use	kWh/yr	Cost per year
Hot / Cold	1,547	\$155.
Warm / Cold	825	\$83.
Cold / Cold	103	\$10.

- Wait for a full load. Washers are most efficient when operated with full loads, or with some models, when water levels are matched to size of loads.
- Use the shortest cycle needed.
- Remove and clean washer's agitator once a month. Clean filters of both water hose inlets on back of machine once a year.
- Use correct amount of detergent. Machines work harder and use more energy with too many bubbles.
- Install washer as close to water heater as possible.
- Insulate water pipes between washing machine and water heater.

Clothes Drying

Dryers are next after refrigerators in the amount of electricity they use.

- When possible, air dry clothes. Drying clothes outside in summer (the fragrance can't be imitated!) reduces air-cooling load, drying indoors in winter contributes needed humidity.
- If line drying is not an option, ensure washing machine can spin at 1600 or even 1800 rpm. This will almost halve energy needed for drying. Drying through spinning is 20 times less energy intensive than with heat (*Greenpeace USA*).
- If possible, locate dryer in a heated space. A cold or damp basement makes it work harder and less efficiently.
- Separate clothes for drying purposes. Lightweight synthetics dry much faster than bath towels or natural fibre materials such as denim.
- When possible, dry full loads. Drying small loads wastes energy.

- Do all loads within one period to maximize energy used to bring dryer to proper temperature.
- Don't open dryer door unnecessarily, as this allows warm air to escape.
- When available, use 'moisture sensor' cycles instead of timed dry to reduce energy by 15% (*California Energy Commission*).
- With manual timing, experiment how long it takes to do a typical load. Do not over-dry.
- Try dryer balls to increase circulation and decrease drying time. A chemical-free replacement for dryer sheets, they can be reused indefinitely.
- Don't add wet items to a partially dry load, as this causes dryer to run longer.
- Take clothes out while they are slightly damp, folding or hanging them to prevent wrinkling and reduce need for ironing (and additional energy use).
- Clean lint trap after each load. A clogged filter can increase energy use by 30% (*California Energy Commission*). Also remove and scrub filters occasionally to remove residue.
- Check vent to outside. Keep vent clean and free from obstruction. Make sure outside flapper closes properly, or replace with one that seals tightly. (Do not vent into attics: moisture spoils attic insulation).

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