

Going Green With



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The Truth About Tankless- What to Consider When Purchasing a Water Heater.


Conservation is one of the keys to living green. Since water heaters are such a large part of our energy consumption, it is very important to choose the most efficient water heating system for your situation.

Tankless water heaters don't store hot water like their tanked counterparts. Water is heated on demand by flowing through pipes coiled around a heat source within the unit. It takes several seconds or minutes for hot water to make its way to the faucet. The minimum flow rate must be met before the unit starts heating water. This makes it difficult to get hot water in low flow situations- such as shaving or rinsing dishes.

Go-Green Tip of the Month

Green your water heater by turning down the temperature and adding an insulating jacket to older models.

Sites to search:

 <http://www.taunton.com/finehomebuilding/>
Search: water heaters tank or tankless

The amount of hot water is limited by the flow rate of the system. Most US homes are limited to a maximum flow rate of 3 gallons per minute which is barely enough for two simultaneous hot water needs. If the hot water demand exceeds the flow rate of the unit the temperature of the water will be reduced.

The cost for a tankless unit can vary from \$700 to \$1,000- not including installation labor which can be substantial. Storage tank units range in price from \$250 to \$500 and are much easier to install. Tankless units cost less to operate, but the savings are often not substantial- sometimes only \$20 per year. This savings can be eroded too if one gives into the temptation to linger in the shower when no longer faced with the threat of running out of hot water.

Storage tank systems are much cheaper than tankless models. Their biggest disadvantage is standby heat loss. However, newer models are much more efficient due to stricter insulation requirements. Size is important on storage tank models. If the tank is too small the hot water is depleted too quickly. Too large of a tank wastes energy.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both types of water heaters. Tankless models are ideal if space is limited, but they are more expensive to purchase and often struggle to keep up with simultaneous hot water demands. Storage tank models are cheaper to purchase, but have a slightly higher operating cost. One must consider their hot water needs carefully when choosing a hot water heater.

If you have questions or comments please send them to: askus@sciremc.com.

Sources

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