

Cold Water Saves

At the recent National Extension Association of Family & Consumer Sciences annual meeting in Omaha we learned about the *Be Bold, Go Cold* Initiative at the American Cleaning Institute's exhibit hall booth.

About 90% of the energy the washing machine uses goes towards heating the water. Washing in cold water saves energy, saves your clothes and could help save the planet. So, check your garment care labels.

Wash 4 out of 5 loads of your laundry in cold water and you could cut out 864 pounds of CO2 emissions in a year. That's equivalent to planting .37 acres of U.S. forest.

Check your garment care labels, and you'll see that many clothes specify to wash them in cool or cold water. This is because cold water is gentler on your clothes, and can protect them from fading, shrinking or bleeding. The right temperature can prolong the lifespan of your clothes and save you money.

Cutting back on hot water can help decrease your energy bill. You might have heard that hot water washes best, but the times they are a changing. Years ago, the composition of detergent was different than it is now. New detergent technology introduces enzymes to the scene that actually work better in cold water. Some stains (think: grass, makeup and blood) should only be washed in cold water, as hot water could make the stains permanent. Load size and amount of detergent can also play a role in how clean your clothes get.

Save energy. Save your clothes. Save our planet. We can all make more sustainable choices in our laundry habits.