

Average household reduction of CO₂ emissions: 263 pounds a year

How

You can probably install an insulating pre-cut jacket or blanket on your electric water heater tank yourself. You can find pre-cut jackets or blankets available from home improvement or hardware stores for around \$10–\$20. Choose one with an insulating value of at least R-8. Read and follow the directions carefully.

Leave the thermostat access panel(s) uncovered. Don't set the thermostat above 130 degrees Fahrenheit on your electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket because the wiring may overheat. You may want to consult the U.S. [Department of Energy's Guide to Installing an Insulation Blanket](#).

Also consider placing a piece of rigid insulation under the tank of your electric water heater. This will help prevent heat loss into the floor, saving another 4 – 9 percent of water heating energy.

If you're a renter, ask your landlord to insulate your unit's water heater. Be sure to point out the benefits: they will save money in energy costs, help residents be more comfortable and help make the region healthier.

Why

Unless your water heater's storage tank already has a high R-value ([link to R-value FAQ](#)) of insulation (at least R-24), adding insulation to it can reduce standby heat losses by 25 – 45 percent. This will save you about 4 – 9 percent in water heating costs.

If you don't know your water heater tank's R-value, touch it. A tank that's warm to the touch needs additional insulation.

Insulating your storage water heater tank is fairly simple and inexpensive, and it will pay for itself in about a year.