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University Of Wisconsin-Extension, Mary Novak, M.S., Family Living Educator, 920-388-7137
E-Mail: mary.novak@ces.uwex.edu

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FOGHORN ADDRESS CHANGES

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Tankless Water Heater



Replacing a conventional tank-type water heater with a tankless water heater, can save energy and reduce costs. Tankless water heaters (called "demand" water heaters) use a small heater, and they have a very small tank. They heat the water as needed so that the unit doesn't lose heat while the hot water is waiting to be used. Tankless water heaters can be an idea for summer homes, or homes with just one or two adults. Visit the website: <http://www.buildinggreen.com> to learn more about the pros and cons of a tankless water heater. Click on green products, then plumbing.

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Child Maltreatment - Requires an Investment in Prevention Which Builds Strong Families

Nurturing, emotional relationships are crucial for a child's healthy physical, intellectual and social growth. Research on brain development shows that early childhood experiences exert a dramatic and clear-cut impact on the brain and its intricate circuitry. When adults respond predictably to an infant's needs, the baby's brain develops properly. Recent studies have found that undermining this nurturing care can compromise a child's long-term thinking and emotional growth. In fact, new brain images have shown that child maltreatment can cause permanent damage to the structure and function of the brain itself.

"Child maltreatment starts a chain of effects that alter brain development," says Pam Peterson, Cooperative Extension family living educator in Door County. For example, early childhood abuse or neglect appears to affect the brain's limbic system, which regulates emotion and memory. This can later result in anti-social behavior. Each year child welfare agencies in the United States receive more than three million allegations

of abuse and neglect. State and county agencies are able to substantiate approximately 1 million of these. In Wisconsin, 42,451 reports of child maltreatment were made in 2004 with a similar number made yearly between 2001 and 2003. Up to 24 percent of these reports could be substantiated. According to Peterson, four major types of child maltreatment are commonly recognized:

physical abuse; neglect; sexual abuse; emotional abuse. Neglect is the most common, and is involved in half of the substantiated cases of maltreatment. Physical abuse occurs in about 21 percent, while sexual abuse, which tends to be reported more often in the media, constitutes about 11 percent of the total number of substantiated child abuse cases. Emotional and verbal abuse probably receive the least attention, even though studies show that children who experience verbal aggression, such as swearing and insults from their parents, exhibit higher rates of physical aggression, delinquency and problems getting along with others.

Both neglected and physically abused children often perform poorly in school. Language

deficits, reduced cognitive functioning and attention deficit disorders appear to be associated with childhood abuse and neglect. In addition, maltreated children tend to have higher levels of depression, hopelessness and low self-esteem.

Two of the most consistent outcomes of physical abuse are antisocial behavior and aggression. Maltreatment can negatively affect children's emotional stability, self-regulation and problem solving skills, leaving them less able to adapt to new or stressful situations. Abused children often have difficulty developing stable attachments to adult caregivers.

Child sexual abuse is a risk factor for teen pregnancy and several studies have suggested a link between childhood victimization and later substance abuse.

What can be done to reduce child maltreatment? Positive parent-child interactions are essential according to Peterson. "This will require an investment in prevention and intervention efforts, expanding on proven strategies, and trying new approaches. The best way to serve and protect children is to support, enhance and build strong families," she says.

Water Heaters Are Big Energy Users - Replace and Save \$\$\$

Your water heater is one of the top contributors to your energy bill. Since electricity is a more expensive way to create heat, an electric water heater costs even more.

According to the Wisconsin Energy Bureau, the hot water heater is the second largest energy user in the typical home. Only your furnace or boiler adds more to your gas and electric bill. This means that if you are looking for ways to reduce your overall utility bills, your water heater could be worth considering.

The place to start is by conserving hot water. There are a variety of almost invisible changes one can make to reduce hot water use. Low-flow showerheads save hot water and give great showers. In the laundry, warm or cold water wash is very effective with modern detergents, and keeps colors from running and fading.

Really hot water coming out of the tap is not only wasteful, but can create scalding hazards, especially for children's delicate skin. Changing the water heater control so that tap water temperature is 125 degrees is safer. It also reduces the "standby loss"; the amount of heat lost from the water heater tank as the hot water sits there waiting to be used.

This standby loss is the single biggest loss of energy in water heaters. However, if you want to have a bigger impact, consider whether it is time to replace the old heater. The average life of a water heater is about 13 years. If your water heater is much older than that you can avoid potential problems and save substantially on hot water costs by replacing the heater. New models

can save up to 30 percent over earlier models.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, water heaters older than average are more likely to break down unexpectedly. Older models not only use energy less efficiently, but their thinner insulation also allows more standby loss.

If you check the energy guides on the various heaters you will see that you may make up for the additional cost in just a few years of energy use. Electric water heaters always cost more to operate than gas heaters. If your area is served by natural gas or LP gas, switching to that fuel for water heating will reduce long-term costs dramatically.

Reduce standby losses by replacing a conventional water heater with a tankless water heater, also called a "demand" water heater. They have a very small tank and a very large heater instead of a large tank and a small heater. They heat the water as needed so that the unit doesn't lose heat while the hot water is waiting to be used.

Tankless hot water heaters have been common for years in Europe and other parts of the world, and interest is now growing in the United States. While product test data are not widely available, reports suggest that these heaters certainly can reduce the cost of heating water, and are reliable and durable.

According to staff at the Wisconsin Energy Bureau, tankless water heaters can be a money saver for some household but not for all. They are an exceptional idea for summer homes, or homes with just one or two adults. Tankless units

provide hot water to the tap as rapidly as a conventional water heater.

On the other hand, tankless heaters can only put out so much water per minute. A household with heavy demand may find a tankless heater less satisfactory. Running the dishwasher and taking a shower at the same time can be a problem if the heater is not large enough to meet the demand of both uses at once. There are a couple of other issues to consider with tankless hot water heaters. The first is that these heaters are more sensitive to hard water than conventional heaters. Hard water can cause corrosion of the coils and shorten life expectancy. This means that in areas with hard water, it is essential to run the water through a water softener first.

Second, plumbers aren't always familiar with them. It is important to find an installer who is comfortable with tankless heaters and is ready to service the unit if anything does go wrong.

Tankless water heaters are substantially more expensive than conventional hot water heaters, and installing a gas tankless heater can be an involved job. Electric tankless heaters are simple to install, but much more costly to operate than a gas tankless heater. They also need very heavy wiring to accommodate their large electrical load.

In households where hot water demand is generally lower, or especially where the water heater sits for days without any hot water use, a tankless heater can be a very smart decision.