



Make Pittsburgh Even Cooler in April:

Get smart about heat in your home; start by turning your water heater temperature down to 120 degrees.

Every year, people across the U.S. waste an amazing amount of energy heating things up unnecessarily, and that energy waste translates directly into a loss of our hard-earned cash and more global warming.

- **Save Energy and Money**

Most people have never adjusted the temperature settings on their water heater, and these appliances often come from the factory set to 140°F. This not only wastes energy and money, but it is also dangerous – it increases the risk of scalding, especially for children and the elderly. Just think of all that energy going to waste right now, keeping your water at scalding temperatures. (Your dishwasher may need a water temperature between 130°F -140°F for optimal cleaning.)

If each household in Pittsburgh turned their water heater down from 140°F to 120 °F, the energy saved would prevent close to 20,000 tons of carbon dioxide per year from being released into the atmosphere. Turning your water heater down by 20 degrees can save 6 - 10 percent in water heating energy costs.

- **How to Adjust the Temperature**

From the U.S. Department of Energy:

“Consult your water heater owner's manual for instructions on how to operate the thermostat. You can find a thermostat dial for a gas storage water heater near the bottom of the tank on the gas valve. Electric water heaters, on the other hand, may have thermostats positioned behind screw-on plates or panels. As a safety precaution, shut off the electricity to the water heater before removing/opening the panels. Keep in mind that an electric water heater may have two thermostats—one each for the upper and lower heating elements.

“Mark the beginning temperature and the adjusted temperature on the thermostat dial for future reference. After turning it down, check the water temperature with a thermometer at the tap farthest from the water heater. Thermostat dials are often inaccurate. Several adjustments may be necessary before you get the right temperature.

“If you plan to be away from home for at least three days, turn the thermostat down to the lowest setting or completely turn off the water heater. To turn off an electric water heater, switch off the circuit breaker to it. For a gas water heater, make sure you know how to safely relight the pilot light before turning it off.”

- **Track your progress**

Go to our website (www.theblackandgoldcitygoesgreen.com) and report your actions so we can measure how much we're all cutting our heat-trapping gases. No computer? Call us at 412-258-6680 to report your actions. Questions about this month's action? Call Pat at the CCI Center at 412-431-4449x 210.

Much of the information from this fact sheet was taken from the article by the U.S. Department of Energy, “Lower Water Heating Temperature for Energy Savings,” available at http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/water_heating/index.cfm/mytopic=13090.