



## How to Adjust a Storage Water Heater

Water heating accounts for about 30 percent of an average Australian household's energy use, "costing" up to \$400 and creating 3,000kg of greenhouse gas. Conventional storage water heaters remain the most popular type of water heating system for the home. They operate by releasing hot water from the top of the tank when you turn on the hot water tap and drawing cold water in at the bottom. Setting the thermostat to a lower temperature will save you money and still provide a hot shower.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Reduce your water heating costs by lowering the thermostat setting on your storage water heater to just over 60°C.

### HOW DO I DO IT?

You can only lower the thermostat on your storage tank if it has a visible control

1. Look for the dial typically located at the base of the tank. It may be behind a cover you can lift up.
2. To change the temperature of the water simply reduce the temperature setting to just over 60°C (minimum temperature allowed under AS3500) on the control panel.



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an expert in environmental living and the author of *Greenology* and *The Australian Green Consumer Guide* provides advice on energy saving in your home

Turn an electric storage water heater down from 80°C to 60°C and save:



Department of Environment and Conservation  
Department for Planning and Infrastructure



If you have an older hot water system the thermostat may be numbered but not shown in degrees of water temperature. To adjust this type of thermostat:

1. Place a thermometer in a small sink and part fill it with hot water.
2. If the water is above 60°C adjust the thermostat down.
3. Check the water temperature again with a fresh flow of hot water to ensure that the water is just above 60°C.

If there is no control panel, the preset outlet temperature of this type of water heater cannot be adjusted by the householder. This setting can only be adjusted by a licensed electrician/plumber or an Accredited Service Agent.

## WHY?

How much you save depends on the number of people in your household, but on average you could save:

- \$60-\$100 in energy bills
- 150kg to 400kg greenhouse gas

For most households, hot water is second only to transport as the largest cause of greenhouse gas emissions. Storage water heaters are often set to heat water to a much higher temperature than is actually required, this means more energy is used to heat the water. It is not unusual to find temperatures over 70°C. By reducing the water temperature setting on your storage water heater to just above 60°C you can significantly reduce your water heating bill. In addition, reducing the water temperature minimises the risk of scalding. Hot water can produce 3rd degree burns in less than 6 seconds at temperatures above 60°C.



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