

# Clothes Washers



**Optional Water Efficiency Measure:** May contribute to the 30 percent water efficiency requirement, depending on the chosen WaterSense® Approved Certification Method (WACM).



## UNDERSTAND

- WaterSense recommends that clothes washers, including those in common-use laundry rooms of multifamily buildings, be ENERGY STAR® certified. These models have an integrated water factor (IWF) of less than or equal to 4.3 gallons of water per cycle per cubic foot capacity.
- Different criteria can apply to residential clothes washers depending on their capacity and whether they are front-loading or top-loading washers.
- ENERGY STAR uses thresholds for integrated modified energy factor (IMEF) and IWF as criteria.
  - IMEF is the energy performance metric. A *higher* IMEF is indicative of a more energy-efficient clothes washer.
  - IWF is the water performance metric. It allows the comparison of clothes washer water consumption independent of clothes washer capacity. A *lower* IWF is indicative of a more water-efficient model.
- Front-load washers generally offer greater opportunity to reduce water consumption.
- Common-use areas in multifamily buildings might have commercial clothes washers, which have different criteria for earning the ENERGY STAR certification, but still improve water efficiency.



## BUILD

- **SPECIFY** ENERGY STAR certified clothes washers and dryers and confirm that they have been labeled by using ENERGY STAR Product Finder at [www.energystar.gov/productfinder/](http://www.energystar.gov/productfinder/).



## VERIFY

- **VERIFY** the appliance's make, model, capacity, and IWF through either of the following:
  - Refer to the product specification sheet.
  - Search the ENERGY STAR Product Finder.

*\*NOTE: Consult with the Home Certification Organization for specific verification protocol.*

### Front-Load or Top-Load: What's the Difference?

Both types of clothes washers can be effective and save water.

- Front-loaders tumble clothes through a small amount of water instead of rubbing clothes against an agitator in a full tub.
- Modern top-loader impeller washers have a low-profile cone or disc, rather than an agitator. Impeller washers are more energy- and water-efficient compared to agitator washers.

ENERGY STAR certified front-load washers are about 25 percent more energy- and water-efficient than top-load impeller washers. However, both designs dramatically reduce the amount of hot water used in the wash cycle and the energy needed to heat that water. ENERGY STAR certified clothes washers also leave less moisture in the clothes, which means less time and energy required for drying.

### Learn More



Check out the ENERGY STAR Clothes Washers web page at [www.energystar.gov/products/clothes\\_washers](http://www.energystar.gov/products/clothes_washers) for more information.



This technical fact sheet is part of EPA's *Technical Reference Manual for WaterSense Labeled Homes*. For the full document and other tools and resources for homes, visit [www.epa.gov/watersense/tools-and-resources](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/tools-and-resources).

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