



## **An Easy Way to Save Energy and Water**

How many times have you turned on your hot water faucet and waited - a long time – for the hot water to make it from your water heater to your faucet? Every time this happens we waste energy and water.

It wastes energy because the delivery of water to our homes takes a fair amount of pumping energy, whether it's coming from a well or your city water supply. In the case of city water, a fair amount of energy goes into treating that water too. Likewise, in the case of city sewer users, treating extra wastewater uses energy.

With water conservation becoming increasingly important (as evidenced by the news recently) the technologies we have to eliminate this waste are important to know about.

The good news is that we have systems to circulate water from the water heater to the fixture furthest from your water heater without wasting a drop. These systems are called “recirculation loops”. To get the water from the water heater to the furthest fixture, without actually opening a faucet, we use a pump. We use a small return pipe (or an adjacent cold water line in retrofit applications) to complete the “loop” back to the water heater.

For retrofit applications (the case for most readers) there is a company that makes a kit suitable for seasoned “do-it-yourself folks”. You can find this company, ACT Metlund, on the web at [www.gothotwater.com](http://www.gothotwater.com) or you can order the system direct by calling 1-800-METLUND.

There are a variety of ways to control the running of the pump. A simple push-button, either wireless or hard-wired, in the bathroom(s) or kitchen can be used to operate the pump. Other controls include an occupancy sensor that activates the pump when you walk into the bathroom or a timer, set to turn on the pump at the time of day you typically use hot water.

The energy used by the small pump is much less than the energy typically consumed by wasting water while waiting for it to get hot. It's also more convenient to have hot water available four or five times faster than normal!

If you're not a seasoned “do-it-yourselfer”, a system built up from locally available parts can be installed by most plumbers. With new construction at a near standstill out there, I'm sure your favorite local plumber would just love a call right about now. So, now you can not only help stimulate our local economy, but reduce waste and get hot water sooner than later – all at the same time!

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