



WATER HEATER INSULATION WRAP

Source: Gerald Hash

Do you need to wrap your residential hot water heater with some form of insulation? Hot water heaters, manufactured in the last 10 to 15 years, are insulated according to high efficiency federal guidelines. These standards exceed any benefit gained from an insulation wrap. Therefore, these newer hot water heaters do not need additional insulation. However, older water heaters, located in an unconditioned space, could operate 10% to 15% more efficiently with a wrap.

An insulation kit includes a 2 inch, R-6 fiberglass blanket with a nylon backing and nylon tape. The hot water tank is neatly wrapped in the blanket and the seams taped. If possible, set the tank on an oversized

circle of 2-inch foam board. The fiberglass wrap is gathered and taped against the tank bottom and weighted on the foam board. Another circular 2-inch thick foam board is tailored to and taped to the top of the tank. The wrap is brought up over the top and taped.

The wrap is cut to access electric panels, then pressed back in place and held with wires from a cut clothes hanger. With gas water heaters, care must be taken to maintain exhaust openings and keep the pilot/burner access port open. Border the wrap edges around openings with HVAC metallic tape to avoid running splits. An insulation kit also includes water line heat traps for hot and cold line ports.

