Amber Weaver

March Commkit – Efficiency

**Dishwasher vs. Handwashing**

What saves the most energy – handwashing or using the dishwasher? It’s a kitchen clean up debate “as old as time” as they say. Not really though as dishwashers weren’t a common appliance in North America until the 1970s. Ever since though, it seems there have been countless commercials and advertisements on which is best for your after meal clean up. [CO-OP NAME] is here to set the record straight: using a dishwasher is more energy efficient for most households.

That decision comes down to one single factor. The dishwasher uses less hot water. Typically, when you hand wash, you fill one side of the sink with hot water to wash and another for rinsing, or you let the tap run to rinse. Filling the average kitchen sink can take four to six gallons of water, depending on size and depth of the sink bowl. A running kitchen sink can use two gallons of water per minute, depending on the faucet type. A standard Energy Star-rated dishwasher uses around three to four gallons of water per cycle. The Energy Star-rated dishwasher uses less water, meaning it uses less energy, and it saves money on your electric bill.

Regardless of where you stand on the debate, we hope you will take these steps to be more energy efficient.

Ways to use your dishwasher more energy efficiently:

* Avoid pre-rinsing dishes. Just scrape off food scraps and grease before loading them into the washer.
* Skip the heated drying cycle. Open the dishwasher door slightly at the end of each cycle to help dry the dishes.
* Only run the dishwasher when there’s a full load.

Ways to handwash more energy efficiently:

* Be sure to scrape dishes before placing them in the sink. This way the soapy water is used for only dishes.
* Don’t fill the sink all the way. A half-filled sink will get the job done.
* Rinse your dishes with cool water.