

Hints For The Home



Soft Water Could Save Homeowners Hard Cash

(NAPSA)—If yours is like most American homes, hard water may be taking a bite out of your household budget.

Approximately four in five houses in the United States have hard water—water that contains the minerals calcium and magnesium. Some of the effects of hard water are easily seen—such as spotted glassware and filmy bathtubs. However, there are a number of hidden problems that hard water can cause, including shortening the life of appliances, increasing energy bills and increasing the amount of cleaning products needed.

Installing a water softener to remove the hardness from your water can help your home run more efficiently and can save you money year after year. Here are some of the cost savings that experts say a family of four with moderately hard water might see within one year of using a water softener:

- Soft water helps prevent the formation of soap scum and hard-water staining in showers, tubs, sinks and toilets, reducing the amount of cleaning products needed. Soft water even helps soaps lather, which cuts down on the amount of soap and cleaners you need to use (potential savings of \$744 a year).

- Makes clothing last longer (potential savings of \$180 a year). Soft water helps maintain the life of fabrics and helps make whites stay brighter and colors last longer.

- Keeps appliances and plumbing working longer (potential savings of \$90 a year). Soft water helps extend the life of appliances, such as washing machines, water heaters and dishwashers. They can last up to 30 percent longer.



Water softeners could save homeowners hundreds of dollars in appliance maintenance each year.

Pipes and fixtures also stay free of hard-water deposits, which saves money on maintenance and replacement.

- Lowers energy bills (potential savings of \$64 a year). Soft water helps water-using appliances run more efficiently. For instance, soft water increases the efficiency of gas-powered water heaters by up to 29 percent and electric-powered heaters by 22 percent.

Starting at approximately \$300, water softeners can pay for themselves in cost savings within a few months for the average family. To ensure that your water softener is operating at peak capacity, experts say to keep the tank at least one-quarter full of softening salt. Using quality salt, such as Morton System Saver II Formula Pellets, can help keep your water softener clean and extend the life of your softener.

For more information, visit www.mortonsalt.com, call (800) 789-SALT or write to Morton Salt, Attn: Consumer Affairs—Test Kit, 123 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60606.