



Hooper Service

ENERGY-SAVING IDEAS for Homeowners (and Business Owners)

Business owners are homeowners too, and eco-friendly living needn't be limited to recycling efforts and waste reduction at the office. Hooper Service, a DeForest-based mechanical contractor that serves both the commercial and residential sectors, recommends a wide range of cost-effective plumbing options that can substantially reduce daily water consumption.

"For a long time, the energy-savings focus has been on HVAC," says Kevin Thompson, Hooper's plumbing service division manager. "And I don't know that people have as high a level of awareness of what the options are on the plumbing side."

Here are five green plumbing solutions designed to serve the environment while also offering a solid (and quick) return on investment:

1. Tankless water heaters use less energy to operate by heating cold water on demand, rather than continually maintaining hot water in a large tank-style heater, which is the default option for most commercial buildings and homes. Tankless heaters are mounted on a wall, thus utilizing no floor space, have a longer life span than tank-style heaters (when maintained properly),

and produce hot water instantly. "While the BTU load is substantially higher on a tankless heater than a tank-styler heater, you're not heating water all night long or when you're on vacation," Thompson says. "You're only heating it when you need it."

- 2. Low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators** maintain high water pressure while minimizing the volume of water dispensed through fixtures while running. Given the simple retrofit process, this switch is one of the easiest and most-affordable ways to conserve water. Despite the ease of installation, Thompson recommends bringing in a licensed professional to make the switch.
- 3. Low-flow dual-flush toilets** maintain high water pressure but substantially reduce water usage. Although installation is no different than for a standard toilet, Thompson says the upfront price likely will be higher. But so will the return on investment.
- 4. Touchless or motion-sensor faucets** help conserve water and reduce monthly utility bills because they only run when a hand is underneath the spout. They also help reduce the spread of germs, a necessity in the post-COVID work environment. As with faucet aerators, installation of touchless or

motion-sensor faucets is simple.

- 5. Leak-free exterior wall hydrants and hoses** help save water and prevent larger plumbing surprises, according to Thompson. "Even a slight leak can waste up to 15 gallons of water a day," he says. If you see leakage, he adds, call someone to repair or replace that wall hydrant.

Thompson notes that Hooper Service, founded as a commercial electrical and mechanical contractor 110 years ago, has bolstered its residential services in recent years and hired technicians specifically with backgrounds in residential. "If we can serve commercial customers, there's no reason we can't take care of homeowners as well," he says. ■



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