



# Take Control & Save<sup>®</sup>

A Cooperative Effort for Energy Efficiency

[www.TakeControlAndSave.coop](http://www.TakeControlAndSave.coop)

## Hot tub and pool costs

### Your energy bills will go up

Who wouldn't love the convenience of having a hot tub or pool in their back yard? But if you are considering purchasing one, be sure to thoroughly educate yourself before 'jumping in.' The simple fact is, if you purchase a pool or hot tub, your energy use and costs will increase. How much will depend on how efficient your equipment is, how often you use it, how you maintain it and a variety of other factors.

### Before you buy a hot tub

Do your research! Not all hot tubs are created equal. Look at multiple brands at a variety of stores before making your decision. When considering the energy efficiency of a hot tub, the key elements to look at are the cover, tub wall insulation and pump system efficiency. Look at energy use guides to compare the use of each model. Check the assumptions for average outdoor temperature, hot tub set temperature, cost per kilowatt-hour (kWh), amount of use and size of motor on the guides. If a vendor cannot show you this information, it may not be wise to buy their hot tub! In addition to energy considerations, check your home insurance policy to determine if you need a separate policy for your hot tub or pool.

### *There are two price tags!*

Remember, hot tubs have two price tags: the initial purchase price of the tub, and the monthly utility cost to operate it.

So before you purchase a hot tub, compare the purchase price against monthly energy costs. Keep in mind, you pay the initial price once, but pay operation costs as long as you use it.



### Older hot tubs are big energy hogs

Hot tubs can also use a significant amount of electricity to heat, circulate and filter the water. That's especially true of older hot tubs. Many newer hot tubs are designed to be more energy-efficient, with excellent insulation and more efficient pumps and controls. ***Some of these newer hot tubs use only half as much electricity as models that were sold just a decade ago.*** Given this information, if you purchase a used hot tub, it may cost you much more to operate versus purchasing a new, energy-efficient one.

### How can I reduce my hot tub energy costs?

There are several things you can do to ensure your hot tub operates as efficiently as possible. The higher the water temperature on your tub, the more electricity it will use, so set it no higher than you need it. When you're not using the hot tub, make sure it's tightly covered with a good, insulated cover. You can even go the extra step and add a hot tub blanket. It lays on top of the water when you aren't using it and adds another layer of insulation. Finally, most people run their filter pumps more often than needed to keep the water clear and sanitary. If your pump has a timer, set it to run for a shorter period a couple of times a day.

### *Did you know?*

Hot tubs consume an average of 2,514 kWh per year, making the average cost of operation more than \$250 a year.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>According to the National Spa and Pool Institute, based on 10 cents per kWh.

## Pools cost money too

Pools not only cost a significant money to purchase and install, they may cost a lot of money in energy use. The two biggest costs associated with pools are the pool heater, and the pump to circulate water. If you're preparing to install a pool or want to improve an existing one, consider an energy-efficient approach to save you money over time.



### Pool heaters

You will pay less in energy costs by not heating your pool; but if you choose to heat it, consider a heat pump or solar pool heater. Like home heat pumps, heat pump pool heaters use proven technology to transfer heat from

one place to another. Although a higher initial cost, heat pump pool heaters may pay for themselves in energy savings over time.

Solar pool heaters are another option. Depending upon the amount of sunlight your pool receives, a solar heater could be your most economical choice. In a typical system, the water circulates through a solar collector which heats the water before it returns back to the pool.

However you choose to heat your pool, keeping it covered when not in use will lower energy costs by reducing heat and evaporation loss.



### Pool pumps

Circulating your pool's water keeps the chemicals mixed and removes debris, but pool pumps often run much longer than necessary.

***This includes portable above ground pools, so limit the time your pool pump is on!*** If the water circulates while chemicals are added, they should remain mixed; and most debris can be removed using a skimmer or vacuum. You can also save by getting the smallest size pump your pool requires, since larger pumps use more energy.

Running a one horsepower pool pump for 12 hours a day costs about \$43 a month!<sup>1</sup>

For more energy efficient ideas for pools, visit [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov) and search "swimming pool heating."

### Take Control & Save!

To find out more about how to save energy and money in your home, visit [www.TakeControlAndSave.coop](http://www.TakeControlAndSave.coop).

<sup>1</sup>Based on a 1,200 watt pump and energy cost of 10 cents per kilowatt-hour.

## Tips to lower your pool and hot tub costs

- \* **Less is better.** Keep heated water at the lowest acceptable temperature.
- \* **Keep it covered!** Always keep your heated pool and hot tub covered when not in use to reduce heat loss. A good hot tub cover will have hard foam insulation and fit snugly on the tub.
- \* **Blankets keep water warm too.** Use a closed cell foam hot tub blanket in addition to your cover. Blankets are inexpensive and add extra insulation to your tub.
- \* **Maintain.** Keep heaters, pumps and motors well maintained and schedule regular maintenance check-ups.
- \* **Timers are your friends.** Make sure the pump time clock is properly set and that the filtration pump runs for only the minimum time necessary.
- \* **Create windbreaks.** Cutting exposure to wind by adding landscaping, fencing or privacy panels can reduce heat loss.

### Water safety tips

- \* Do not have any electrical appliances within five feet of a pool or hot tub.
  - \* Better yet, use battery operated, rather than electrical, appliances near water.
  - \* Any electrical outlets within twenty feet of a pool or hot tub should be equipped with a GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter).
  - \* Never swim or use your outdoor hot tub during a thunderstorm.
  - \* Don't touch any electrical appliances until you are completely dry.
- To learn more about electrical safety visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).



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