

## Multifamily Facility Management Services

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### TEMPERATURE SETTING ON SERVICE HOT WATER HEATER

#### **Description:**

Water temperatures above 130°F from the service hot water (SHW) in multifamily buildings are typically higher than required to provide adequate hot water for domestic uses and may actually cause burns for young children. (Note: keeping SHW heaters at high temperatures to take into account the needs of automatic dishwashers is no longer necessary since most dishwashers today have internal booster heaters capable of raising the water to higher temperatures if required.). Reducing the temperature of the SHW heater will also significantly reduce energy expenditures.

#### **How to Implement:**

In most cases, 130°F is the best overall setting for a SHW heater in a multifamily building, but some experimentation is necessary to determine how low to set the system. For example, it is possible that 130°F will not provide enough hot water if the tank is small or has a slow recovery rate. On the other hand, water temperatures can sometimes be reduced to as low as 120°F.

The dials on some SHW heaters do not indicate actual temperatures, but merely show relative temperatures with terms such as “hot,” “warm,” and “cool.” In addition, dials which indicate actual temperatures are usually not that accurate. As a result, the best way to adjust the temperature on a SHW heater is to move the dial down slightly, leave it for a few days and then measure the temperature at a water tap close to the SHW heater using a thermometer. (Simple and inexpensive dial type thermometers are available at most heating and plumbing supply stores and at a number of hardware stores.) If the temperature is still high, repeat the process until the temperature has been reduced to 120°F at a close water tap and then stop. In the event of tenant complaints at some point during the experimentation, the SHW setting should be returned to the level that worked just prior to the complaints. In most cases, this setting will still be considerably lower than the original setting.