

# The Columbus Dispatch

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## THE SENSIBLE HOME

# Hot-water dispenser saves time, money

JAMES DULLEY

**Q:** We drink quite a bit of hot tea at our home. I now keep a small electric pot of water hot all day. Would it be more energy-efficient to install a sink-type hot-water dispenser?

**A:** Keeping a small electric pot of water hot all day is not the most energy-efficient method for making tea. During the winter, the heat lost from the pot helps to warm the house, but the electric resistance element is expensive to operate.

During the summer this pot of hot water is a triple loss. First, it uses electricity to heat the water. Second, your air conditioner must run more to remove this heat from the house. Third, the hot water gives off humidity to the room.

A sink-mounted hot-water dispenser is a much more efficient method to get hot water instantly for tea or coffee. There also are many other uses for the instant hot water such as warming baby food, cleaning cheese or butter off a knife, etc. Running a little hot water over a new jar often makes it easier

to break open the seal on the lid.

A hot-water dispenser is different from an instant water heater, which heats the cold water as it is used. Instead, a hot-water dispenser has a small, highly insulated hot-water tank under the countertop. In effect, it is a mini water heater in the kitchen. With its insulated tank, very little heat is lost to the kitchen, so less electricity is consumed.

A typical hot-water dispenser can heat enough water for about 50 cups an hour. This is more than most families will ever use. For better-tasting water, some models include optional water filters. Another option is a countertop model that uses bottled water and might include a chiller for cold water.

You should be able to install a hot-water dispenser yourself because it operates on just standard 120-volt electricity. The most difficult part of the installation process is making a new hole in the countertop. Depending upon your needs, the water temperature can usually be set between 140 and 180 degrees. The lower temperature settings are ideal for cleaning tasks.

If you have children who can reach the hot-water dispenser's handle, select a model with a child-resistant push button. A typical design requires a 90-degree turn of the button to switch it from the locked, off posi-

tion.

The following companies offer hot-water dispensers: Anaheim Manufacturing (1-800-854-3229, [www.anaheimmfg.com](http://www.anaheimmfg.com)); Elkay (630-574-6404, [www.elkay.com](http://www.elkay.com)); Franke (1-800-626-5771, [www.frankeusa.com](http://www.frankeusa.com)); In-Sink-Erator (1-800-558-5700, [www.insinkerator.com](http://www.insinkerator.com)); and Tri Palm International (1-800-646-2747, [www.oasiswatercoolers.com](http://www.oasiswatercoolers.com)).

**Q:** I called two window companies to check my old windows for possible repairs or to give me a quote on new ones. They charge \$100 to come out, but they will refund it if I buy windows. Is this normal?

**A:** With today's slowing business environment, I'm surprised to hear any company would charge you to give a quote on installing replacement windows. Perhaps they thought it was just a service call.

Call several more window contractors and tell them you want quotes on new windows and also on repairs. I am sure many will come out free. Do some research so they can't push you needlessly into new windows when the old ones can be repaired.

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ANAHEIM MANUFACTURING

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