



# Safety and Environmental Newsletter

October 2021 — 114<sup>th</sup> Edition



## DIGITAL EYE STRAIN

Eye safety is about more than wearing the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while on the job. It's about paying attention to the often overlooked hazards around you, like computer screens, televisions, or your phone. It's also about knowing how to find relief should an eye injury or strain occur.

**Symptoms of eye strain include headaches, blurred vision, neck and shoulder pain, and dry eyes. *Do you know what to do if you start to experience eye strain?***

- Blink more frequently
- Keep your eyes hydrated — use artificial tears
- Practice the 20/20/20 rule (more on that below)
- Adjust screen brightness to match the brightness level around you
- Avoid glare on your screens
- Adjust placement of your monitor(s) to roughly 18-25 inches from your face

### Practice 20/20/20



Take a break every  
20 minutes



Focus on an object  
20 feet away



Hold your gaze for  
20 seconds

For more information and resources, please visit the NASA Safety Center's eye safety page [here](#).



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## October is National Energy Awareness Month

October is National Energy Awareness month, reminding us of the necessity to commit to personal energy efficiency, a key component in meeting Goddard Space Flight Center's energy reduction goals. This month the Energy Team launched the first-ever Agency-Wide Virtual Energy Awareness Event. Each week throughout October 2021, we are unlocking new content through tips and other fun resources. Check out the [Energy Awareness Sharepoint](#) to view all the Energy Awareness Month Activities.



### Water Heater Efficiency

Optimizing your home water heater system can provide fruitful energy and water savings. The DOE reports that the average household water heater consumes 18% of your home's energy and about 64 gallons of water per day. Luckily, there are multiple actions you can take when attempting to reduce the electricity and water consumption from your water heater.

- **Temperature Setpoint:** Check the temperature setpoint of your home water heater. DOE recommends water heaters be set at 120°F. 120°F is hot enough to prevent bacteria buildup and as a bonus can slow mineral buildup and corrosion in the water heater and pipes, maximizing your heater life.
- **Insulation:** Insulating your house pipes can help reduce heat loss and can raise water temperature 2-4 degrees higher than uninsulated piping. Insulating your pipes can also reduce the time it takes to get hot water from faucets and showers, reducing water consumption. Insulating your pipes is a potential DIY project you can take on. Check out this [DOE walkthrough](#) to see what you need to get started.
- **Preventative Maintenance:** Check the recommended maintenance for your home water heater. Performing preventative maintenance on your home heater not only extends its life but maximizes its energy efficiency.
- **Appliances:** When purchasing new home appliances that use hot water, such as dishwashers and washing machines, ensure they are Energy Star Appliances. Energy Star Appliances can help reduce energy and water consumption