

Talking about your water system with a contractor

Choose an experienced, licensed installer for your heat pump water heater installation. Errors during setup can pose serious risks for the installer and anyone who comes in contact with the system later on.

Though you probably won't be installing the water heater yourself, it helps to familiarize yourself with the system. This way, you can oversee the installation and know how the water heater is supposed to function.



› Checking the water pressure

For \$10-\$20 at the hardware store, you can get a water pressure gauge. Attach it to an outdoor faucet and measure the highest pressure day or night. If the pressure exceeds your unit's recommended range, it can damage the heater.

› Adding a thermal expansion tank

A thermal expansion tank is a safety device that accommodates extra pressure created when water gets heated. Make sure the thermal expansion tank is sized for your water tank and pressurized to match the water pressure in your home.

› Preventing water damage

Any plumbing supply shop can offer you a leak detection and automatic shutoff device. This inexpensive accessory provides a layer of protection against water damage, which can be very expensive.

› Safety from scalding

Water from a heat pump water heater can be hot enough to burn your skin. A thermostatic mixing valve controls the output water temperature by mixing hot and cold water.

› Avoid recirculation loops

Recirculation loops increase the energy use of your water heating system and are not recommended in combination with heat pump water heaters.

› Copper piping

For homes with copper pipes, your contractor should follow the manufacturer's recommendations before soldering or use compression fittings instead.

› Seismic bracing

Strapping a water tank to the wall is always a good safety precaution. It minimizes the risk of equipment damage and injury. In areas prone to earthquakes, such as California, it's a requirement.

› Maintenance and servicing

Routine maintenance will keep your heat pump water heater performing well and prevent the system from falling into disrepair. Note the maintenance steps and be ready to perform them yourself or arrange for someone else to do it.