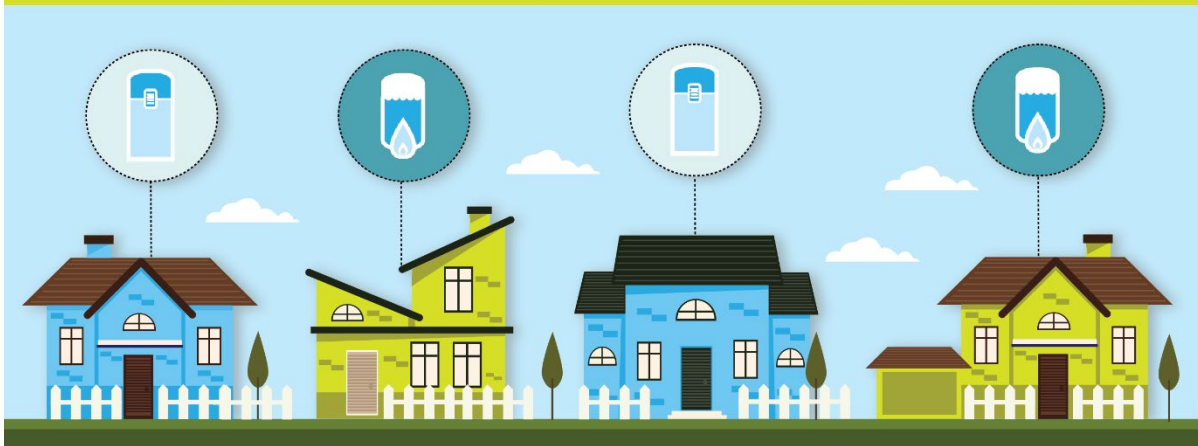


# WATER HEATING NEWSLETTER



## ENERGY STAR® Water Heater Newsletter Spring 2022

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## Don't Forget to Act for Earth Day

By now, you all know that Earth Day is April 22, and have perhaps already celebrated through education or social media. This year, ENERGY STAR leveled up with our [Earth Day Toolkit](#), which was created to empower a broader audience by providing partners with educational content full of actionable guidance on saving energy, reducing carbon emissions, and supporting a clean energy future.

Don't forget to join us by sharing these educational messages on social media and through employee outreach channels in celebration of Earth Day - along with messages about how heat pump water heaters can help save the earth.

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## Helping Customers Make the Switch to Heat Pump Water Heaters

ENERGY STAR's [installer finder tool](#) is up and running with new functionality to help your customers connect with HPWH retailers near them. When they enter their zip code, they'll now receive information, not only on qualified installers and financial incentives, but also on retailers and locations near them to purchase a heat pump water heater. The tool was created in partnership with NEEA, AO Smith, Rheem, and Bradford White to ensure a successful HPWH purchase and installation experience.

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## Increasing Consumer Confidence in Heat Pump Water Heaters. Ask the Experts!

Did you know that ENERGY STAR has a team of experts available to answer consumer questions about heat pump water heaters? All the ENERGY STAR expert advice can be found on the [Ask the Expert website](#).

Coming soon, an "Ask the Experts" featuring an explainer on how heat pump water heaters work, who should consider installing one, and Matt Risinger's ['The Build Show' episode](#) on heat pump water heaters.



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## ENERGY STAR Heat Pump Water Heater Manufacturers Action Council

### ESMAC Influence Continues to Grow Across the HPWH Industry

The ENERGY STAR Water Heater Manufacturer Action Council (ESMAC) has successfully positioned itself as an influential HPWH industry stakeholder. ESMAC has provided the ENERGY STAR team feedback on its 2022 outreach plans and on savings comparison figures for Water Heater Specification V4.0, and provided design input for the upgraded Heat Pump Water Heater Installer Finder tool on the ENERGY STAR website. ([ENERGY STAR Certified Water Heaters](#) | [EPA ENERGY STAR](#)).

Don't miss ESMAC at these upcoming industry events: Massachusetts Landlords Training webinar, AESP April Member Webinar, AESP May Training Meeting, AESP August Summer Conference sessions, Energy and Environmental Building Alliance (EEBA) Summit, and Advanced Water Heating Initiative (AWHI) project team presentations.

Contact ENERGY STAR to explore additional options to engage and collaborate with ESMAC.

Utility Partners: [eeaccountmanager@energystar.gov](mailto:eeaccountmanager@energystar.gov)

Retail and Manufacturer Product Partners: [changetheworld@energystar.gov](mailto:changetheworld@energystar.gov)

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## Water Heater Specification Updates

On March 28, 2022, a correction to the demand response test method and clarification to the demand response requirements for connected water heaters was released.

The final draft of ENERGY STAR's Version 5.0 water heater specification is targeted to be released in Q2 2022 and will include updated requirements for gas water heaters – meaning that gas products that do not meet Version 5.0 will drop off the ENERGY STAR list by the middle or end of 2023. This next draft will also address changes to the demand response requirements.

ENERGY STAR continues to participate in the AHRI 1430 Demand Flexible Water Heater standards development and hopes to rely on this standard for demand response performance in future versions of the water heater specification.

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## Partner Spotlight

### Spotlight Panel with Home Builders

ENERGY STAR sat down with three leading home builders who promote HPWH to their clients to learn more about the benefits, challenges, and advice they have for builders and customers. Our panelists included Juan Fernandez of CVF Homes (San Antonio, TX), Leigha Dickens of Deltec Homes (Ashville, NC) and Stefan Orenda of Mandalay Homes (Prescott, AZ). Below are excerpts from our discussion. We look forward to checking back with these innovative companies in the future to get updates on their progress with HPWH.

#### Why did your team start installing HPWH? What was the biggest draw to the technology?

**Juan @ CVF Homes:** We started installing the HPWH for our all-electric homes and our main focus was the high efficiency of the systems for our climate zone in Texas.

**Leigha @ Deltec Homes:** We build custom homes and customers drive the selections for the appliances and system types in their homes. We work very often with customers interested in high energy performing homes so heat pump water heaters are an important part of the discussion between different water heating options. We often have clients who have very high energy goals, do not want or do not have access to propane or natural gas, and would find solar thermal prohibitively expensive or do not want to deal with its higher maintenance, so it makes sense for them to consider HPWHs. About 7 years ago we switched from discussing solar hot water as the “high performance” option to adding heat pump water heaters into the mix—mostly due to the high maintenance costs our customers were finding with solar hot water in reality, on top of the high upfront costs.

**Stefan @ Mandalay Homes:** We moved to HPWH systems as a step away from gas towards all electric homes. The draw to the technology is the efficiency and reliability.

## How have customers reacted to HPWH as an option for their water heating needs?

**Juan @ CVF Homes:** Heat pump water heaters are new to our homes, and we will be delivering the first HPWH in about a month.

**Leigha @ Deltec Homes:** It varies. The majority probably still do not realize the technology is an option and find it intriguing compared to what they were considering which is either tankless (but then have to explain the difference between tankless propane/gas and tankless electric), or just a standard electric resistance water heater. Though customers are increasingly educated about heat pump water heaters as an option and are asking if it's something they can acquire. I have customers building remotely off grid who ask for a HPWH because it is their only way to meet an electric budget for off grid solar and a limited availability of propane backup. Some customers do not appreciate the additional noise and cold air returned, but all appreciate the energy savings.

**Stefan @ Mandalay Homes:** People ask, "What is that thing on top of the water heater?" Once we tell them how it works, they're usually either impressed or indifferent. There is product familiarity to the consumer, since HPWHs look like standard models. The concern about having enough hot water when needed is alleviated. Given the efficiency of these units, the cost of operation is a positive conversation. We've had very little, if any, resistance.

## In what scenarios have you recommended/NOT recommended HPWHs to your customers?

**Juan @ CVF Homes:** The reason for not recommending a HPWH is when the location of the unit is in a small closet and venting is complicated or when interior noise is a perceived concern.

**Leigha @ Deltec Homes:** Homes on a concrete slab or ones with a low height crawlspace with limited mechanical area are not a good fit for heat pump water heaters in general.

**Stefan @ Mandalay Homes:** Because heat pump water heaters are a standard feature in all our homes, we never recommend a different option.

## What wins have you seen with HPWHs? What losses?

**Juan @ CVF Homes:** For the all-electric homes in our climate zone I think there are only wins.

**Leigha @ Deltec Homes:** Once building envelope measures are at the desired level of efficiency, heat pump water heaters are the most powerful way to further lower a HERS score. In tall, sealed crawlspaces, they can be a great fit. In basements with adequate mechanical space, they can be a good fit that offers some supplemental dehumidification. HPWH with 80 gallon tanks are a great solution for homes with large soaker tubs. We used the Custom Consumer Newsletter delivery profile and will plan to send to the consumer newsletter distribution list.

Regarding losses, the noise factor is especially important when compared to super quiet ductless mini-splits coming to market more. You need to plan for the best location of the condensate drain. Getting plumbers to route condensate lines correctly requires additional oversight. Understanding product warranties is also important, including who the appropriate party is for technical support.

## What issues, if solved, would increase your use of HPWHs?

**Juan @ CVF Homes:** I think that as more HPWH are sold the purchase price will come down. Technology that provides for a smaller and quieter unit will go a long way in terms of adoption.

**Leigha @ Deltec Homes:** There needs to be a physically smaller option for sealed crawlspace applications in the Southeast. Quieter options are needed because clients are generally very sensitive to new noise/vibration sources. We need more training for installers to ensure they have confidence in these products.

**Stefan @ Mandalay Homes:** Of all challenges we've faced over the last couple years, HPWHs have not been on our list. They are part of the included features in our homes, so the only limiting factor to increasing installations is the current lengthy lead times to building a home.

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