

Checklist: 5 Warning Signs You Need a New Water Heater

Blog: The 4 Biggest Risks When Installing a Tankless Water Heater in Lawrenceville

Did you take a hot shower this morning? Thank your water heater. This appliance is one of the most used in homes across the country, but it's also one of the most neglected. Too many homeowners don't realize they need to buy a new water heater until it's too late.

Regardless of whether you own a tanked or tankless version, you should be on the lookout for these five signs that your water heater is on the fritz:

- 1. You wait forever to get hot water.** No matter the type of water heater you own, you have to wait a few seconds for the water to heat up. How long this process takes depends on a few things, including how far away the faucet is from the water heater. Take note if your water seems to take longer to heat up, and call a plumber to investigate. Waiting longer than usual for warm water is a surefire sign it's time to repair or replace your water heater.
- 2. You hear knocking and banging.** Your water heater should be quiet for the most part. If you own a tanked model, you may hear a soft humming whenever the heating element turns on. Tankless models are pretty much silent. Report any unusual noises to a local plumber. Percussive sounds may be a sign of either sediment buildup or a loose connection.
- 3. Your energy bill seems high.** All water heaters require an energy source to operate. Whether you have an electric, gas, or hybrid unit, you should keep a close eye on your energy bill. Take note of any sudden changes. If you notice the bill increasing each month, you may want to have your water heater inspected. As the appliance wears out, it may become inefficient.
- 4. You spot a leak.** Puddles of water around your water heater are not normal. Both tanked and tankless models can leak. Be aware, however, that a tanked model can flood a room with 20-30 gallons of water at once. Tankless versions don't pose this risk, but they can still leak. If you notice wetness around the connections or at the base of the unit, call a plumber right away.
- 5. The heater is old.** Everyone knows that water heaters don't last forever, but old units still catch homeowners off-guard. Perhaps this is because, as the saying suggests, time flies. If you have a tanked water heater, you should consider buying a new unit every ten years or so. Tankless models last longer, and most homeowners only have to replace them every 20 years. Some units may last a few years longer.