

New home primer, Part 2



On demand water heater

Photos Jim Hurley

By Jim Hurley

In Part 1 of the New Home Primer – or things that everyone should know about their house – we covered your water and gas main valves, so now let's go on to locating your water heater. Some homes may have two, which I typically see when a master suite was added as an extension.

There are two types of water heaters: Tank or On Demand.

Tank heaters have a pilot light which must be lit for them to stay hot. If your hot water is running cold, your pilot light is out. How to relight the pilot? I found several videos on YouTube regarding this

process. Also, PG&E provides a pilot light service, if you can't get it lit yourself, but you will have to wait until they get there.

Old tanks eventually wear out, and usually the first sign of this is water dripping from the bottom. If there is water dripping from your tank heater, turn off the filler valve above it and get a new heater before the leak becomes a flood.

The tankless, or On Demand water heater is becoming more popular in homes. They are literally high-powered burners that heat the water as it flows through the line when the tap is opened. It never runs out of hot water (unless you forget to pay your gas bill). There is no pilot light because they use electronic ignition, but must have electricity to run. If your On Demand hot water is cold, make sure it's plugged in and there is power at the outlet.

Our last stop in the New Home Primer is your electrical panel, or panels. Find the electrical meter on your home. Open the cover to the box under or beside the meter and look at the breaker switches.

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Electrical panel