

Advantages & Disadvantages of Conventional Hot Water & Tankless Heaters

Imagine cutting your water heating cost by 50 to 70 percent and having an endless supply of hot water for lengthy guilt free showers. Sound too good to be true? Not if a tankless water heater is at work in your home. But whether it will work for you depends on how you & your family use hot water.

A tankless system provides heated water on demand, as opposed to a conventional tank heater, which maintains a large supply of water that is kept warm all the time.

Here is how it works: When a hot water tap is turned on, cold water trails into the unit. Either a gas burner or an electric element heats the water, which then flows through a heat ex-changer. As the water flow varies, the unit adjusts the heating elements or burner flame to maintain a constant temperature and maximize energy efficient. The whole system shuts down how as soon as the hot water tap is closed.

The result is an endless supply of hot water, but only for a single task. You can shower for hours, but don't try washing clothes in hot water, running the dish washer or another shower in the house at the same time.

Here's a breakdown of the advantages and disadvantage of conventional and tankless water heaters:

Conventional

- Up to 12-year warranty
- Life expectancy of 8 to 20 years
- Energy is used to maintain a constant temperature in the tank
- Floor space required and tank are getting larger due to added insulation

Tankless

- 15 year warranty for heat exchangers
- Life expectancy of at least 20 years
- Hot water is produced on demand, but the amount of water the unit can process at once is limited
- No floor space required, unit hangs on the wall