

## Three Common Questions We Hear From Heat Pump Water Heater Installers

From troubleshooting error codes to keeping up with evolving HPWH technology and rebates, we break down the most common topics and where to find reliable answers.

Hot Water Solutions leads **heat pump water heater (HPWH) trainings** across the Northwest—and installers have similar questions everywhere we go.

This is a good sign that more contractors are getting more familiar with heat pump water heaters, learning what works best, and helping their customers save energy and money. Below are a few of the questions we hear regularly, along with practical guidance and links to helpful resources.



# 1. My customer's HPWH is throwing an error code. What should I do?

**Short answer:** Start with the manufacturer's manual.

This probably seems obvious, but since HPWHs aren't all built the same, similar-sounding error codes on one unit won't mean the same thing on another. Error and alarm codes are brand specific, and in some cases, even model specific.

That said, most error codes tend to point to a handful of common issues:

- Restricted or blocked intake or exhaust airflow
- Sensor faults
- Condensate drain problems
- Communications issues
- Power supply or wiring issues

If you're getting an error code, start by identifying the make/model and looking up the exact error for that unit using its installation manual. If you don't have it handy, refer to our [Product Guides and Manuals page](#) for links to each major manufacturer.

Follow the manufacturer's diagnostic steps, ruling out problems such as clearances, filters, drains, and power. This quick check against the manual may just save you from a callback.

## 2. How much better have heat pump water heaters gotten since the early days?

**Short answer:** *Quite a bit.*

Although they've always been very efficient, previous generations were louder, had stricter installation requirements, and fewer features than the newest models. Over the last decade, manufacturers have steadily improved performance, efficiency, and usability, and have expanded the diversity of product options.

- **Higher efficiency:** Higher tiers deliver more hot water per unit of energy, which helps customers lower bills (and helps utilities hit savings goals).
- **Quieter, more user-friendly units:** Manufacturers have responded to installer and consumer feedback, designing models that are much quieter when the compressor is running.
- **More product options:** The latest update to the **Qualified Products List** includes more brands, sizes, and configurations than ever. Customers now have more choices, so they can find a HPWH that fits their home and meets their needs.
- **Better cool-climate performance:** Many current models work well even in cooler spaces, such as the garages and basements found in many Northwest homes.

If you aren't sure about HPWHs based on past experience or anecdotes from years ago, it's worth taking another look—today's models do more with less, and they're more versatile than ever.

### 3. How do rebates and tax credits work right now?

**Short answer:** *It's worth double-checking for rebates and tax credits every time—your customers will thank you.*

Incentives are one of the main reasons customers finally decide to replace their old electric tank with a heat pump water heater instead of a standard electric unit. They can bring down the sticker price of a HPWH significantly, helping unlock years of savings for their household.

But it's not always straightforward. Utility rebates tend to be reliable, and many have increased this year, while federal incentives have been introduced and rolled back. Here's what we recommend:

- **Utility rebates come first.** Many local Northwest utilities offer a rebate when a qualifying HPWH is installed in an existing home. The amount and requirements vary by utility, so check our **Rebate Finder** to help you find current info for your service area.
- **Stacking is often possible.** Customers can generally combine their utility rebate with federal incentives, so it's smart to show the "after incentives" price when you're quoting. That can make HPWHs much more competitive with the pricing of standard electric tanks.

HPWHs are evolving fast—every year brings new models, smarter controls, and better performance in more types of homes. Whether you're new to HPWHs or an experienced installer, you may have some questions.

If you have specific questions, don't hesitate to reach out to the **Hot Water Solutions team**. You can also take a deeper dive with our **on-demand HPWH trainings** for a comprehensive look at the technology, installation best practices, and tips and resources to keep your customers happy.

