



HSV – You’re not in hot water...

Description

Or are you? (Educational Purposes Only)

By Lloyd Sherman, January 6, 2022

Not being a fan of cold showers, I was dismayed to recently discover that our hot water heater died a quick and fatal death. Fortunately, we continue to have a home warranty so we filed a claim with them. They were quick and responsive, came out, and verified that yep, it’s gone! A new one was ordered and much to our surprise it came in within two days.

So why am I telling you this story? Because it is often what you don’t know or weren’t sure of that matters.

I had heard that you might need a permit to replace your water heater or HVAC. So, the first thing I did was check the policy manual and it was totally unclear as to whether you need a permit or not. Like the good soldier I try to be, I called the POA and was informed that yes, I needed a permit. I informed them it was in the process of being installed and much to my amazement, I was told that if I didn’t get the permit that very day, I would be charged a penalty. I paid the requested \$60 fee and was informed the Inspector would be out the next day.

He arrived as promised, but because I was at work, the wife was left to interact with him. He went into the crawl space, inspected the water heater, and then came to the door to inform the wife he had completed the inspection. He told her the water heater did not have a pop-off valve. He left no paperwork and we had no record that he had even been here. I immediately contacted the licensed plumber who installed the water heater and he informed us all new water heaters had a pop-off valve pre-installed.

You are probably wondering again, why I am telling you this story:

1. So that you can be informed that permits are required for such replacements. *I believe the policy has been updated to be a little more specific.*

2. So you don't get caught off-guard in the unlikely case that the POA knows that you upgraded/replaced these items.

This is not a slam against any employee that is following through with what they understand the process to be. However, as my history has dictated, I am pointing out yet another process/procedure that can't possibly be enforced unless the property owner brings it to the attention of the POA.

Why do we have these enforcement policies in place that can't be monitored? Why do we send a building inspector out to check the work of a licensed plumber or HVAC technician? We get paperwork for these types of services from the installer. We got zip from the POA that would show the unit had been inspected and whether it failed or passed, and no follow-up was done by the POA to see what had been done regarding the pop-off valve in our case.

So please just beware that according to policy, you are required to get a permit for replacing electrical or plumbing items in your household. Exactly how far that goes, I have no clue. Does it also include a new toilet, light switch, etc.? I dunno. Do you?

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