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# HOUSE WISE

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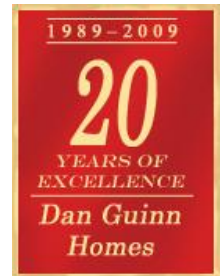
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GE's new Heat Pump  
Hot Water Heater

## Are you Going to be an April Fool?

By Elizabeth Guinn



Thinking about a new appliance? If you live in Virginia or one of the other participating states, April is the time to buy. The Department of Energy has recently earmarked \$300 million for appliance rebates. The program is designed to get people to replace old boilers, heat pumps, water heaters, fridges, room air conditioners, washers, dishwashers, freezers, and furnaces. I checked out the Virginia Departments of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) website (<http://www.dmme.virginia.gov/DE/ARRA-Public/ARRA.shtml>) and was pleasantly rewarded for my visit. The state of Virginia has received 7.45 million dollars to start their new appliance rebate program. The details have yet to be announced but will be announced on the website in the upcoming weeks. Every little bit

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## Dan's Desk

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By Dan Guinn

As is often the case our home's appliances will slowly but surely decline in performance as they approach the end of their useful life's expectancy. Until eventually they give up and die completely, unfortunately for most people this never happens at the most opportune time. This is why many savvy homeowners' will decide to have their homes evaluated by us. I bet you did not know that an Energy Audit can help to diagnose potential disasters before they occur.

Most recently I have been queried with the question "Does it mean my water heater needs to be replaced if....." You can fill in the blank with a number of symptoms and if the unit is more than ten years old the usual response is yes. The next

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in times like these, are a welcome help. The program is designed to get old and terribly inefficient hot water heaters, refrigerators and the like unplugged and to replace them with Energy Star rated ones. The amounts of the rebates will be between \$50 and \$250 and it is still uncertain whether each homeowner can apply for more than one rebate.

The program is only in effect until the money runs out. If this program is anywhere near as popular as the last DMME rebate then you had better act quickly because the last program ran out of money in about a week. So do your homework now, have your appliances checked and decide what needs to be replaced and pick out the replacement appliance now. Make arrangements with your contractor to do the install and get all your ducks in a row.

But whatever you do, don't purchase one early. The program is absolutely not retroactive and will not take effect until officially announced. Participation in the DMME rebate program does not disqualify you from also participating in the Federal rebate program

(<http://www.energysavers.gov/financial/70010.html>) so go ahead and look up both of them and see just what you can save. So hold on just a little longer. Don't be an April Fool, book mark this website and visit it often, the rewards are great!

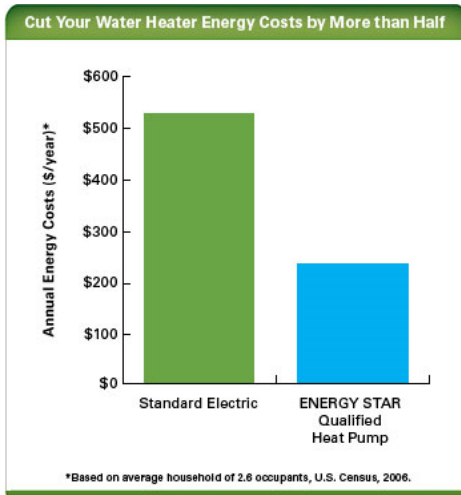
Also, GCI Energy Consultants and Dan Guinn Homes are here at your service if you need any help with the paperwork or with the installation. Give us a call and we will be on our way!



Call Today to Schedule your Energy Audit

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*Taking you from  
Dreams to Reality  
Psalms 127:1a*



## Elizabeth Guinn

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question I get is “What type of water heater should I replace it with?” This is the topic I hope to shed some light on. The short answer is of course the Energy efficient type. Yeah I know, thanks Dan for stating the obvious, but there is more than one right answer to that question. Every situation is a little different and there are many choices to choose from. That is why it is always a good idea to take into consideration all the variables in order to determine the best solution.

There have been great advances in the water heater industry in the past few years but perhaps the most interesting to me is the latest introduction. The Heat Pump water heater, not exactly a new idea just refined to a more affordable super efficient package. The newest models have their own smaller heat pump right on top of the tank. These super efficient models can cut your yearly water heating costs in half, nearly \$300 in savings for most families. Unlike tank less water heaters which save money on standby losses, the more you use the more you save. With two teenagers a dog and endless loads of laundry, I like those kinds of savings.

The best part about these units is that they have an amazing EF of 2.0-2.5, which more than doubles the best electric water heaters on the market(1.0 is the best they can be). What is EF you ask? EF stands for energy factor this number indicates a water heater's overall energy efficiency based on the amount of hot water produced per unit of fuel consumed over a typical day. These units are so efficient because they move heat from one place to another instead of creating it. Heat pump water heaters absorb heat from the air and then release it into the water. Over simplified but that is the basic principle.

“So what’s the down side?” you may ask? This does mean there is a cooling effect on the air that is used to absorb heat from, which can be overcome by exhausting it outside. The temperature of the air where the unit is located has to stay between 40° to 90° F for peak efficiency, not a problem if you locate it right next to the furnace. Lastly, it also requires 1000 cubic feet of air space to function properly; a standard sized garage has about 4000 cubic feet. Oh yeah, did I mention that it qualifies for the 30% federal tax credit program (includes labor & materials). I really can’t think of a deal breaker here!

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