

SAFE SWITCH: CONVERTING FROM GAS TO ELECTRIC APPLIANCES



What To Know Before Making the Switch

Switching from gas to electric appliances in your home comes with several important safety considerations to be aware of. To ensure a safe and effective transition, it is essential to carefully read the product manuals and safety instructions for each new electric appliance to understand proper installation, operation, and maintenance. **Always consult a licensed professional before disconnecting a gas line or handling electrical wiring.**



Electrical System Readiness

Electrifying your home will increase the amount of electricity your home needs. It's essential to evaluate your electrical panel's capacity to make sure it can handle the new electric appliances. You should check your utility meter box, the main breaker, or a label on your electrical panel for its amperage rating. Never guess about electrical work; if you're unsure, consult a licensed and qualified electrician to assess your panel and perform any necessary upgrades or wiring. An electrician can help you determine the total amps needed for your current and new electric appliances. If your electrical panel is old or has old fuse boxes, it's important to upgrade to keep your home safe. You may need approvals from your electric utility PRIOR to starting work on a wiring or panel upgrade.



Handling Gas Lines

When replacing any gas appliance, it's crucial to turn off the gas to the unit and have a licensed professional cap and seal the gas line. Avoid moving natural gas appliances yourself. Improper handling can lead to gas leaks, which are very dangerous and can cause serious health problems, explosions, or fires. After capping, always check for leaks by spraying a mixture of soap and water on the cap; if bubbles form, there's still a leak. If other gas appliances remain, their pilot lights must be relit properly.



Informed Operation

Reading the product manual and safety instructions for new electric appliances is crucial for ensuring proper and safe operation, as well as maximizing their performance and efficiency. These manuals outline installation guides, necessary maintenance tasks, and offer troubleshooting steps, including how to reset the unit after a power outage. They address unique safety considerations and provide instructions that are vital for the safety of both the appliance and the homeowner.



Product-Specific Considerations

Heat Pump Water Heater (HPWH):

- Ensure there's adequate air circulation around the unit for best performance and longevity, as HPWHs extract warmth from the surrounding air.
- Locate the unit in a space that generally stays above 38°F for optimal performance.
- Limit continuous operation of recirculation pumps, using timers or motion sensors instead, as continuous circulation can strain the unit and increase energy use.
- If noise is a concern, especially near bedrooms, consider using vibration-dampening measures like placing the heater on rigid foam or adding cushions to seismic straps.

Induction Cooktops:

- Ensure cookware is strongly magnetic or specifically labeled “induction compatible” for efficient energy transfer. Hold a magnet to your existing pots and pans. If the magnet sticks, they are compatible with induction cooktops. Use pans that fully cover the cooking zone and place them in the center. Avoid using damaged pans.
- For individuals with pacemakers, there's some evidence that the electromagnetic fields (EMF) from induction cooktops might interfere with certain devices. While induction ranges are generally safe, it is advisable to keep a distance of at least 2 feet (60 cm) between the range and the pacemaker and consult your healthcare provider.

Heat Pump Clothes Dryers:

- Ventless dryers recirculate air, which may result in a bit more humidity around the unit. To prevent mold growth, avoid installing these dryers in enclosed spaces.
- A common recommendation is to size your dryer with roughly twice the capacity of your washing machine to allow for proper air circulation and tumbling.
- If your dryer is not set up to drain automatically, you will need to regularly empty its water collection tank.

REDUCING ENERGY WASTE ACROSS WISCONSIN

Focus on Energy, Wisconsin utilities' statewide program for energy efficiency and renewable energy, helps eligible residents and businesses save energy and money while protecting the environment.

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