# GUIDELINES FOR REPAIR
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# WATER HEATERS EXPOSED TO WATER DAMAGE

**The Department of Codes and Building Safety urges you to use extreme caution when restarting any Water Heating Equipment that has been water damaged. Prior to re-starting any equipment, you should have a licensed Plumbing or Mechanical contractor inspect the equipment and clean or repair as necessary prior to putting back in use. Generally, replacing a residential 50-gallon water heater does not require a permit. If you were to replace the water heater and change the fuel type (example: going from gas to electric), a permit is required.**

**Below are some guidelines to help determine if replacement is the better choice than repair.**

**Water Heating Systems:** Whether a water heater uses gas, or electricity, if it was exposed to water damage, the unit should be replaced. A new water heater is a relatively small investment, and replacing it is fairly easy to do. If the water heater was more than five years old, it is likely that a new unit will be more efficient, which will save the homeowner money in the long run. In a gas unit, valves and controls can corrode. In an electric unit, the thermostat and controls can corrode. In both types of units, the insulation surrounding the unit will likely be contaminated and will be nearly impossible to disinfect. In addition, the insulation takes a great deal of time to dry and can lead to corrosion of the tank from the outside. Even if water heater components have been cleaned and the unit seems to operate properly, parts may corrode in the future. Both gas and electric water heaters have a pressure relief valve that can corrode and stick after being exposed to water damage. Homeowners should be sure, therefore, to replace this valve as well.

The Air Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI) is the trade association which represents manufacturers of air conditioning, heating and commercial refrigeration equipment. For more information visit the following website http://www.ahrinet.org


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