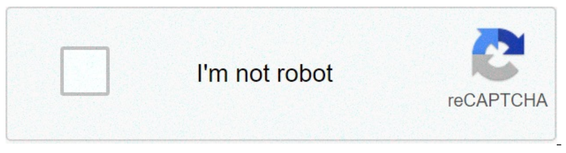

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Why did my electric hot water heater stop working

Power outages are a normal occurrence. Usually, by themselves, they are no issue, but sometimes they bring with them some minor to major problems. Electric hot water heater not working after a power outage is one such problematic situation. Depending on what has gone wrong with the water heater, it could either be a minor thing or something as significant as a dead water heater. Water Heater Takes Time To Heat Water If you have used up all the hot water while the power was out, you have to give your water heater time to heat more water. It is not an instant heating device. Water heaters operating on gas take around half an hour to 40 mins to heat a tank full of water. An electric heater takes around twice as long. Even after the passage of this time if there is no hot water, you have cause for concern. Check The Power Supply The power is back up inside the home, but it's entirely possible that the power supply to the water heater is still not through. There is a probability that after the outage, only partial power was restored and not complete due to some fault. Maybe your water heater is one of the affected appliances. Using a "circuit tester", you can check whether your water heater is receiving power or not. If not, you need to figure out why. There are a couple of reasons that could be the cause. These are – 1. Tripped Circuit Breaker – Due to a surge in electricity, when the power came back on, the circuit breaker may have tripped. To rectify, you will have to push the tripped circuit breaker back to "On" position. Once that is done, your water heater should start functioning normally. However, if the circuit keeps tripping, it's better to ask your local HVAC technician to come and have a look at the problem. Remember the circuit trips only when there is an overload. So, maybe you need to reaccess your electricals and wiring. 2. Cut Or Burnt Wires – While the power was out, a small animal or rodent could have chewed the wiring leading to the water heater. Similarly, the wire may have been cut by mistake or burnt due to overheating. Whatever be the case, the power came back on, but since the wires were damaged, the water heater could not function. You will need to figure out where the wires were cut, chewed or burnt and replace them. Since this job needs to be performed correctly due to its hazardous nature, let your plumber or electrician deal with it. 3. Faulty Switchboard – The fault could also lay in the switchboard from where the water heater is powered. Maybe the earthing is not proper, or it has a loose connection. If you have some basic idea of electricals, this is something you can check on your own. In case you have any misgivings, it's best to call your electrician. 4. Plug Problems – Just like a faulty switchboard, the plug that connects the water heater to the power supply source too could have loose connections. Open the plug and tighten all wires. If any wire is hanging free, put it in its correct position and tighten the screws. Your water heater should be all set to take care of your household demands for hot water. All the above are possibilities when the water heater is not receiving power. If, however, its power supply is on, you need to look at a few additional things such as – 1. Thermostat Malfunction – The thermostat of the water heater could have malfunctioned; the power outage was just an excuse. Try resetting the thermostat by first bringing it down to zero. Wait for a couple of minutes and take it to the desired temperature. Hopefully, your water heater not working after power outage should be resolved. If this does not work, the chances are that you may have to replace the thermostat itself. Call your local plumber, to check it out and replace it, if required. 2. Low/High Voltage – Your water heater needs a certain minimum voltage to operate. Most residential water heaters operate at 220/240 volts and some at 110/120 volts. If the voltage is less than the minimum or higher than the maximum, as a safety feature, it will shut down or not function. If your water heater is not getting adequate voltage, it is probably because there is a problem with the electrical system of your home. You need to get this checked immediately by a trusted and qualified electrician. Once the voltage is back to normal, your water heater will resume functioning on its own. 3. Burnt Heating Elements – Quite possibly, the heating elements of your water heater have all burnt out. This is usually a gradual process and happens as your water heater gets older. You can try replacing the burnt elements to extend the life of your aging water heater. To be honest, if your water heater is more than a decade old. it is recommended to buy a new one. 4. Tripped Reset Button – Another possibility is that your water heater's reset button has tripped. A faulty thermostat, shorted heating element, and loose wiring may be the cause of this trip. Until you correct this trip your water heater will not work. This reset button is usually red in colour, and when it trips, it pops out. You have to push it back in. Closing Thoughts A power outage on its own will never harm a water heater. However, when the power comes back, a sudden voltage surge can fry the water heater. This will happen only if the circuit breaker does not work. It is thus essential to make sure that the electrical system of your home is reliable and trustworthy. Other than that, your local plumber or plumbing company should be able to take care of any water heater problems. Do not ever tinker with your water heater on your own. It is not a toy you can play with. Last night my electric water heater stopped working and I'd like to figure out whats wrong with it before going off and calling a repair service. What are some things I can do to troubleshoot this? So far I've: Did a quick check and it isn't isolated to a single room. Checked the water heater for leaks, but everything appears normal. Checked the breaker and it was not tripped. I also flipped it off and back on and that also had no effect. Update: I broke out my multi-meter and did some further testing: I tested the breaker itself. It is working properly. I tested the heating elements for resistance. Both read ~12/12.5 ohms No power is going to either element (actually, there is but its < 1v) Last night my electric water heater stopped working and I'd like to figure out whats wrong with it before going off and calling a repair service. What are some things I can do to troubleshoot this? So far I've: Did a quick check and it isn't isolated to a single room. Checked the water heater for leaks, but everything appears normal. Checked the breaker and it was not tripped. I also flipped it off and back on and that also had no effect. Update: I broke out my multi-meter and did some further testing: I tested the breaker itself. It is working properly. I tested the heating elements for resistance. Both read ~12/12.5 ohms No power is going to either element (actually, there is but its < 1v) Have lukewarm or cold showers become the norm in your household? Do you frequently burn your hands in the water coming from the tap? Or maybe your electric water heater has sprung a leak, is making noise, or produces rusty water that smells like eggs…whatever the case may be, your electric water heater is not working properly. Use the tips below to begin the troubleshooting process before you call an HVAC professional! IMPORTANT: DO NOT begin troubleshooting your electric water heater until you have turned off the power via the fuse or the circuit breaker at RISK OF ELECTROCUTION. 1. No Hot Water From My Electric Water Heater Before you turn off the power to your electric water heater, check to make sure the upper and lower thermostats and electric heating elements are receiving power and working. If they are not, check the associated circuit breaker(s) or fuse(s) to see if they have tripped or blown. In the case of a tripped or blown circuit breaker or fuse, you may simply need to restore the circuit breaker or fuse in order to restore your electric water heater. If everything is receiving electricity as it should but one of your upper or lower thermostats or electric heating elements is not working, you likely have a faulty upper or lower thermostat or electric heating element that needs replaced. If everything is receiving electricity as it should and appears to be working properly but you still have a problem, it may be an issue with your high-temperature limit. At this point, turn off the power to your electric water heater. The high-temperature limit for an electric water heater is factory set and not intended to be adjusted. This makes it a bit difficult to get to. To access your high-temperature limit reset button, remove the access panel, insulation, and plastic safety guard from the upper electric heating element on the electric water heater. DO NOT touch any of the wires or electric terminals, but test them with a non-contact voltage tester to ensure they are not receiving any electricity. Press the red button above the upper thermostat to reset your high-temperature limit. Replace the access panel, insulation, and plastic safety guard. If this solves the problem and you are done troubleshooting your electric water heater, you are now free to turn the power back on. An issue with adequate hot water could be related to the size of your electric water heater and not a maintenance problem. If your household demand for hot water is higher than 75% of the volume of your electric water heater, you may find yourself running out of hot water on a regular basis. Consider upgrading to a bigger model or decreasing your hot water demand by limiting showers, installing a low-flow showerhead, or spreading out your dishwashing and laundry. 2. Water Is Too Hot If the water coming from your electric water heater is too hot, you could simply have one or both of your upper and lower thermostats set too high. They should both be set to the same temperature, somewhere between 110°F and 140°F. In order to change these settings, you will need to once again turn the power off to your electric water heater, test the wires, and remove the access panel, insulation, and plastic safety guard. Your thermostat settings can be adjusted using a flathead screwdriver. Depending on the model you possess, you may need to refer to the owner's manual for the temperatures associated with the letters on the dial. If you can see temperatures, then you are ready to adjust without the manual. Once you are done adjusting temperatures, replace the access panel, insulation, plastic safety guard, and restore power to your electric water heater. No progress? For more troubleshooting tips, stay tuned for Part II in our series, Why Is My Electric Water Heater Not Working? 5 Reasons. If you have an emergency and you need the help of an HVAC professional, give us a call at Moore Heating. We have been providing quality HVAC services to our Alaskan clients for over 30 years and we would love to get you the help that you need. Share on FacebookShare on TwitterShare on Linkedin © JupiterimagesA water heater is a necessity in any home. You need hot water to wash clothes, dishes, and of course to bathe and shower. But what do you do when the appliance stops working?That's what happened to Keith in Ocala, Florida, who said, "A couple of months ago, our electric water heater stopped making hot water, but several hours later, it started working again and was fine for more than a week."Then, something puzzling happened. "Now it has stopped making hot water altogether," Keith says. "What could be wrong, and can I fix it myself?"An electric water heater — which a lot of people call a hot water heater — can malfunction for all kinds of reasons.For instance, check the circuit breaker to make sure it hasn't tripped. Then, check the emergency cutoff switch near the appliance's thermostat. Press it back in, if it's popped out, to reset functionality.Next, check the appliance's heating element to make sure it hasn't burned out. To do that, cut off power to the water heater, unscrew the access panel to expose the end of the heating element. Then, use a continuity tester on each terminal to make sure the heating element is working. (Listen to the podcast for more details on this process.)If the water heater's heating element needs replacement, then it's time to call in an electrician or plumber.Listen to the Today's Homeowner Podcast for more home improvement tips![1:57] "We removed carpeting in our house and found the oak floor we had hoped for. The flooring is covered with a compound. I'm not sure if it's a leveling or adhesive. Can you help?"[7:21] Best New Product: DeWalt ATOMIC 20-Volt MAX Brushless Compact Reciprocating Saw[9:04] Danny and Joe discuss lawn care and attacking weeds.[11:02] "I converted a small grassy area into a decorative patio with bricks and large pavers filled in between with loose small river stone. Over the years the area accumulated silt in the river stone and weeds started to grow. Is there an outdoor material that I would be able to pour into the current patio stone design that would bond the river stone in between the larger stone?"[14:15] "I have a deck at the New Jersey Shore, right near the water, and we have stainless steel nails which were put down and they became rusty. Is there anything I can do to clear up the rust?"[16:21] "I want to put stone in my front flowerbed and I was wondering, should I put mulch or a material blocker under it first before I put the stone on it, to help keep the weeds out, or just put the stone in and then spray it every year if I get weeds?"[17:13] "We're having a lot of air conditioning hot spots on our second level. Wanting to know what you think about duct booster fans and what you would recommend for one."[18:54] "My family and I are moving into a new house in a few weeks. One of the things I want to do is seal the garage floor before we move in all of our stuff. Our last house had a stained garage floor, but it started peeling where we parked the cars. What can I do differently to prevent that from happening this time?"[22:15] "A couple of months ago, our electric water heater stopped making hot water, but several hours later, it started working again and was fine for more than a week. But now it has stopped making hot water altogether. What could be wrong, and can I fix it myself?"[24:31] Simple Solution: Four ways to keep window-box plants happy and healthy[26:14] Question of the Week: "We had a leak in our family room a few weeks ago. The roof was repaired, and I decided to Kilz the watermark before painting. I used the water-based Kilz Premium Primer/Sealer/Stainblocker, and waited a day before painting with flat ceiling paint. The water stain is gone, but all I see is a shiny area where I put the Kilz. What can I do to fix the shine?"Simple Solutions4 Flowerbox Tips: Here are four ways to keep plants in your flowerbox or window box healthy and happy:• Drill 3/8-inch-diameter drainage holes in the box bottom so the soil doesn't stay soggy. Space the holes about 8 inches apart.• To stop soil from washing through the drainage holes, cover the box bottom with an inch of gravel. Or, if you're concerned about the added weight of the gravel, line the bottom with empty 12-ounce water bottles instead.• Plant a variety of flowering species of different colors: put flowing vines in front, short plants in the middle and tall plants toward the rear to create an attractive tiered presentation.• At the end of the season, remove the boxes, empty the soil, and store the boxes indoors until next spring.White-Ring Remover — When a damp glass is left for too long on a table, it'll often leave behind a white ring. In some cases, the ring will disappear on its own within 24 hours, as the surface dries out.However, if the ring doesn't disappear, try this: Mix equal parts of white vinegar and vegetable oil in a small bowl. Then, use your fingers or soft cloth to rub the solution into the table, working in the direction of the wood grain.Dry the table with paper towels. If any of the white ring remains, repeat the process.Question of the WeekQ: "We had a leak in our family room a few weeks ago. The roof was repaired and I decided to Kilz the watermark before painting. I used the water-based Kilz Premium Primer / Sealer / Stainblocker, and waited a day before painting with flat ceiling paint.The water stain mark is gone, but all I see is a shiny area where I put the Kilz.I have painted it three times now. What can I do to fix the shine?"A: We're not sure why a stainblocker with a flat finish would appear shiny, especially under three coats of flat ceiling paint. But if you repaired the ceiling with joint compound, sometimes that has a sheen to it. What may be shining through is that repaired area.You may need to repaint the whole ceiling, and maybe try an eggshell or semi-gloss finish. Test this solution in one spot and see if it helps! If it does, then paint the whole ceiling.In addition, try a middle-of-the-road or premium paint, because sometimes the cheapest one is cheap for a reason. Other Products and Links MentionedDaich CoatingsKlean StripIt's Heat Your Home Week, sponsored by American Standard Heating and Air Conditioning!Want to make sure your home is nice and toasty from the first cold snap? Click for all the money-saving advice you need to stay warm and comfortable.

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