

# IS THERE A GAS WATER HEATER BAN IN THE BAY AREA?

## Your Complete Guide to BAAQMD Rule 9-6 & Heat Pump Water Heater Conversion



*Modern Heat Pump Water Heater — the zero-emissions solution for Bay Area homes*

In 2023, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) passed **Rule 9-6**, mandating that starting 2027, any new water heater sold or installed in the nine Bay Area counties must be a "**Zero NOx**" (nitrogen oxide) emitting appliance. In practice, this means transitioning from traditional gas water heaters to high-efficiency **Electric Heat Pump Water Heaters**. This guide answers the most important questions homeowners are asking right now.

### Key Compliance Dates at a Glance:

- **2027** — Residential gas storage water heaters (30–75 gal, single-family homes)
- **2029** — Larger commercial & multi-unit water heaters
- **2030** — Statewide overlay rule takes effect across all air quality districts

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### What is the BAAQMD "Zero Emissions" Water Heater Rule?

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) passed **Rule 9-6** in 2023. This rule mandates that starting in 2027, any new water heater sold or installed in the nine Bay Area counties must be a **"Zero NOx"** emitting appliance — effectively requiring a transition from traditional gas water heaters to high-efficiency Electric Heat Pump Water Heaters.

While this is not technically a "Ban On Gas Water Heaters," it means that after **December 31, 2026**, gas water heaters will no longer be sold in this nine-county area. Certain gas units or certain homes may be eligible for a **variance** to allow a one-time emergency gas water heater replacement, with the understanding that a conversion to heat pump will be required the next time the unit is replaced.

## 2 When Does Rule 9-6 Go Into Effect?

### Compliance Timeline

#### 2027

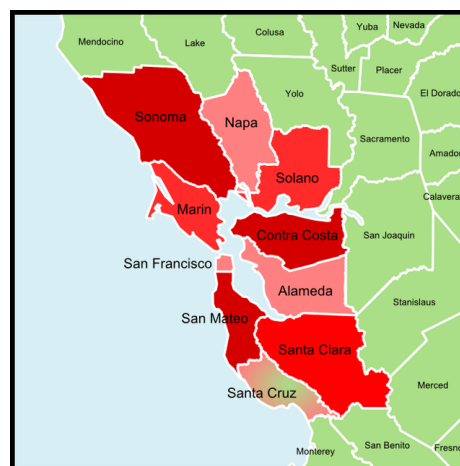
Residential gas storage water heaters (30, 40, 50 & 75 gallon units — anything with more than 75K BTU input) for single-family homes.

#### 2029

Larger commercial and multi-unit water heaters. This will affect the remaining styles of larger commercial gas water heater tanks.

#### 2030

A statewide rule will overlay the air quality management districts rules, extending the zero-emissions requirement across California.



Map: The nine Bay Area counties affected by BAAQMD Rule 9-6 — Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma.

## 3 Do I Have to Replace My Working Gas Water Heater Right Now?

**No.** You are not required to replace a functioning gas water heater. The rule only applies when your current unit fails and needs to be replaced. However, many homeowners are choosing to switch early to take advantage of current rebates and avoid the "emergency rush" once the ban begins.

Additionally, homeowners with older gas water heaters are preventatively replacing units with a gas water heater, allowing themselves time to plan and budget for the heat pump conversion. This is based on personal homeowner choice and what is best for the current electrical situation in the home.

## 4 Which Counties Are Affected?

The rule currently applies to all **nine counties** within the BAAQMD jurisdiction:

Alameda

Contra Costa

Marin

|             |               |           |
|-------------|---------------|-----------|
| Napa        | San Francisco | San Mateo |
| Santa Clara | Solano        | Sonoma    |

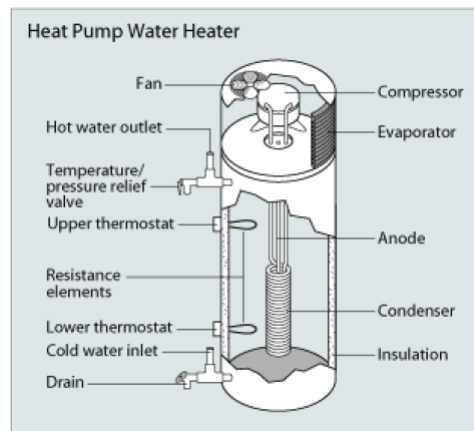
Note: A statewide rule will also take effect in 2030, extending zero-emissions requirements beyond the BAAQMD jurisdiction.

## 5 What is a Heat Pump Water Heater, and How Does It Work?

Instead of creating heat through combustion (burning gas), a heat pump water heater **pulls heat from the surrounding air** and transfers it into the water tank.

Think of it as a **"refrigerator in reverse"** — it moves existing heat rather than generating new heat, making it **3 to 4 times more efficient** than a standard gas unit.

Key components include a fan, compressor, evaporator coils, and a condenser — all working together to extract ambient heat and deliver it to your water supply.



How a heat pump water heater works

## 6 Are There Rebates Available to Help With the Cost?

**Yes!** Because this is a major environmental initiative, there are significant incentives available — however, these incentives are on a **first-come, first-served** basis. The sooner a homeowner can apply or claim a rebate, the more affordable the conversion will be.

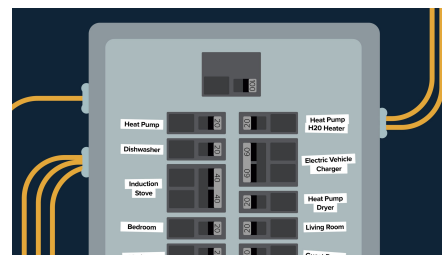
| Rebate Program                                    | Typical Amount        | Notes                         |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Local Utility Rebates<br>(TECH Clean CA / BayREN) | \$1,000 – \$3,000+    | Varies by area & equipment    |
| SWITCHISON.ORG                                    | State & local rebates | Check your zip code           |
| Federal Tax Credits                               | Up to 30%             | IRA energy efficiency credits |
| Panel Upgrade Rebates                             | Varies                | Available in select areas     |

**Tip from Water Heaters Only, Inc.:** Our expert staff can help you identify and apply for the best available rebates in your specific zip code. Call us today and ask about help with a heat pump conversion — rebates are not guaranteed until they are claimed and approved.

## 7 Will I Need to Upgrade My Electrical Panel?

In some cases, **yes**. Since you are moving from a gas-powered appliance to a **240-Volt electric appliance**, a new 240V circuit may be required.

Depending on your current panel, it may have room to add an additional double-pole breaker. If your panel is full, you may need a **full panel upgrade**.



Electrical panel — may need upgrade for 240V heat pump

The good news: there are rebates and incentives in certain areas for panel upgrades. As a last resort, manufacturers offer **120V Plug-In** heat pump models that do not require as much electricity and can use a standard outlet — though these recover hot water at a slower rate than 240V models.

## 8 Why Should I Call Water Heaters Only, Inc. Before 2027?

Waiting until 2027 means you may face significant challenges:

| Risk                | What It Means for You                                                                |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Higher Demand       | Contractors will be booked out weeks in advance as the deadline approaches.          |
| Supply Chain Issues | High demand for heat pump units could lead to local shortages and longer wait times. |
| Expiring Rebates    | Many current high-value rebates are "first-come, first-served" and may be exhausted. |
| Emergency Pricing   | Urgent replacements often cost more — planning ahead saves money.                    |



## Why Choose Water Heaters Only, Inc.?

Water Heaters Only, Inc. is an expert in the water heating industry. As one of the first water heater specialty companies founded — **serving the Bay Area since 1968** — we have the experience, the knowledge, and the expert staff to guide our customers through the entire heat pump water heater conversion, while also working to assist homeowners with securing the **best prices and incentives available**.

|                    |                      |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| ✓ Expert Staff     | ✓ Rebate Assistance  | ✓ Licensed & Insured |
| ✓ Same-Day Service | ✓ Upfront Pricing    | ✓ Since 1968         |
| ✓ 5-Star Rated     | ✓ 500,000+ Customers | ✓ No Hidden Fees     |

### Ready to Make the Switch?

Call to speak with a water heater expert today and let's figure out the best plan of action for your home.

**(833) 379-8800**

waterheatersonly.com | Licensed & Insured | Serving the Bay Area Since 1968

**Water Heaters Only, Inc. — Trusted Since 1968**

Expert Heat Pump Water Heater Conversions for Bay Area Homeowners

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