

C O N T A C T :

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**SAFETY ADVISORY FOR RESIDENTS WITH FLOODED WATER HEATERS**

ASHLAND CITY, TN – September 21, 2004 – As tropical storms and hurricanes batter the south-eastern and south-central United States, it is critical that homeowners take the proper precautions before and after flooding occurs. The Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association (GAMA) recommends the immediate replacement of any residential gas water heater exposed to flooding. Furthermore, this is not a do-it-yourself job. It should be handled by a qualified, licensed contractor.

A service advisory issued by State Water Heaters, a GAMA member manufacturer, states: "If consumers are unsure of the viability of any gas appliance after a flood, they should consult a professional and replace the unit." The State Technical Service Department also offers the following tips to reduce the risk of damage due to flooding:

- **Contact a professional.** If the unit was exposed to flood waters in any way, have it replaced by a professional in your area.
- **Cut off the gas.** Turn off the main gas valve if flooding is imminent or there is a gas smell around the gas water heater after a flood.

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- **Give it a lift.** Consider raising the hot water heater above the projected flood level in order to avoid water damage.

The potential damage to gas controls due to flooding – both seen and unseen – presents a hazard that can only be avoided by replacement of the appliance. Dirt and debris can get into controls and corrode those controls as well as other components in the combustion train.

Even though appliances exposed to flooding may appear to be operational, the gradual buildup of dirt and corrosion over time can render safety devices inoperative. State therefore recommends a complete replacement of residential gas water heaters damaged by flood waters. Residential electric heaters may be put back into operation after replacement of the affected controls and a professional assessment by a licensed plumber.

For more information on the full selection of State residential water heaters or for a State service agent in your area, contact the State Customer Care Center (1-800-365-0024) or visit www.statewaterheaters.com. For more information about GAMA recommendations, visit www.gamanet.org.