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Troubleshooting an RV Furnace

Posted by Misty Fauchaux on July 7, 2011 at 9:56 pm

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The previous article in this series taught you how to use a tow bar for a jeep. Now you'll know learn how to troubleshoot your RV furnace when it's not working properly.

A RV furnace is your lifeline to comfort in the dead of winter. If it's not working, you may not be near any repair shop to get it fixed. You can, however, troubleshoot some [common RV furnace](#) issues. You may be able to quickly fix them, and then get back on your way.

Furnace Settings

First, verify that you have the thermostat turned to Heat, especially if you have a dual furnace and air conditioner unit, and always turn the unit on. It is perfectly normal for your blower to turn off and on when the furnace is on. This is not a problem.

Give your furnace blower about 30 seconds to start blowing air. Your furnace burner takes a few seconds to come on so give it time to start. Once the inside air temperature reaches the correct temperature setting, your furnace will turn off. If you want it to run for a longer period of time, raise the temperature setting.

Furnace Burner Not Lighting

If the blower is running, but the burner is not igniting, try [cleaning the burner](#), exhaust or intake vents. They may be clogged with dirt and debris. Definitely clean the burner if you see a lot of soot in the black line. Check the sail switch, and clean it as well if it's dirty. If the [sail switch](#) looks clean, use a multimeter, and see if the part has continuity. If not, you need a new one.

If your furnace won't come on at all, verify that you have gas in your propane tank. If not, then you need to refill it. This is perhaps the most common problem that people run into, and it's also the easiest to fix! Simply find a place that offers propane gas, and get your tank filled.

Furnace not Putting Out Enough Heat

Check your gas line if you are not getting enough heat. If the line is extremely kinked or warped, you probably need to replace the line. Turn off the gas, and purchase a gas line that *fits your particular tank*. Also, verify that you have the right size tank for your RV. Read your manual if you are unsure what size tank you need.

Pilot Light Not Lighting

If the pilot light won't light up, verify that the [thermocouple](#) is in the right place. If not, you may need to reposition it. If the thermocouple looks fine, do the following test to see if you have a bad regulator on the propane tank:

1. Light up all the burners on the stove.
2. Let the burners run for a few minutes, and check the color of the flame. **You should have a bluish flame.** If the flame is very weak or yellow, change out the regulator.

Never block the furnace with objects, and verify that it has proper airflow. If not, the pilot light may not light, or you won't get enough heat.

If you need assistance with any of the RV furnace repairs, contact an authorized repair person. If you **smell gas, immediately turn off any appliances that are running and the gas supply.** Immediately contact a technician for assistance.

Stay tuned for our next How To installment for more recommendations for your RV.

4 Comments

- By: Bobby

My furnace makes my lights get brighter then dim back and forth while running. what causes this

- By: gus

blower does not go on, nothing happens

- By: del

new to rv=ing. furnace not working. took to rv repair and they replaced the circuit board and said the converter was bad and wanted 400 to replace it. i replaced the converter myself for 200. well the furnace motor will run when i turn the thermostat switch to on but nothing else happens. when i turn the switch to off and set the thermostat up to call for heat nothing happens, no blower, nothing.

- By: del

hum. dumb me. u hv to turn the switch on for it to work then the thermo controls the operation of it and the heat. now to fig out how or why the it won't lite.tnx

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