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RV Plumbing Tips

Posted by Misty Fauchaux on June 15, 2011 at 7:40 pm

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[Expansion tanks](#) in RV's are not just made to help you carry more fresh water with you, but to keep you from losing water during the heating process. At home you usually do not have to think about the waste water that happens when you are heating water for daily usage. When your water is limited, you have to consider what happens with all the water in your system.

Water Heater

Expansion tanks can relieve pressure from the [water heater](#). You will still need to keep an eye on the pressure that happens within the tank while the heating unit is turned on, the expansion tank can be used for the water to flow to while the heater is working. You should look around when fitting your RV with such a tank as there are sometimes less expensive versions available at home improvement stores. Sometimes these tanks hold a greater volume. Remember the greater volume equals greater weight. For towable RVs this can sometimes add additional issues like any significant weight source including an increased fuel cost.

Water Pressure

Expansion tanks can sometimes handle higher pressures than the normal water tank. This difference in pressure can allow the tank to fill more quickly. This lets the water pressure during output stay consistent. This can be particularly nice during a shower or if trying to wash dishes. In addition, it can make the water pressure higher, also nice for rinsing soap when cleaning. This convenience alone might be enough to justify the added cost and weight of the tank. Some of the most frustrating moments when being on the road for an extended period of time come from dealing with water and lack of [water pressure](#). Decide your most important needs for an expansion tank prior to purchasing. If it is simply holding more water, pressure might be less important to you, but if you are on the road for an extended period of time a long, high-pressure shower could be a nice addition.

Expansion Tank Placement

The placement of the expansion tank should be considered. Depending on your RV layout, you can choose a location that will not disturb anyone who is sleeping within the vehicle. Often times the main water tank is located in a central location. This can wake people sleeping on the living room beds when someone flushes the toilet in the middle of the night. If you can place your new tank in the far front or rear of the unit, you might be able to eliminate disturbing sleeping guests. Depending on the size of the tank, you need to look into the weight factor for good balance within the RV. Large water tanks should be somewhat central from left to right of the vehicle. The weight of the tank is not consistent enough to balance properly as when it is empty it will be significantly lighter than when you first fill it. While the weight is not going to cause an overall problem for the RV it can affect the wear on the tires and force you to [align the wheels](#) more often.

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