

# Hot Water Tank Safety Tips For You and Your Family



From cleaning to cooking, washing to laundry, a lot of our daily household activities and necessities rely on the availability of hot water.

However, as with anything that involves heat, there's always a need to be safety conscious. Everyone can experience scalding from hot water, especially children, the elderly and people with a disability.

This is why it's important to have a safety-first attitude about your household water and your Hot Water System.

We want to share our top safety tips about hot water use and your hot water tank.

Here's our list to help you enjoy your hot water while keeping you and your family safe.

### **1. Install a tempering valve to minimise the risk of scalding.**

To adhere to the Plumbing Regulations, The Australian Government requires that all new hot water systems should feature a tempering valve or have a thermostatic mixing valve installed.

A tempering valve helps ensure your hot water's temperature will not exceed 50°C when it comes out of your tap – which is warm enough for baths and showers, but not too hot to cause scalding.

If you're unsure if your hot water system has a tempering valve, speak to a professional Plumber today.

The below graph\* shows how important it is to have a hot water tempering valve to avoid excess heat and the potential of resulting burns.

<b>Water °Celsius</b>	<b>Major Burn in</b>
49°C	5 minutes
52°C	1.5-2 minutes
54°C	30 seconds
57°C	10 seconds
60°C	less than 5 seconds
63°C	less than 3 seconds
66°C	1.5 seconds
68°C	1 second

*\* Reference: Chris Riedy, Geoff Milne, 2013, Your Home, Australian*

*Government, <https://www.yourhome.gov.au/energy/hot-water-service>*

## **2. Immediately repair dripping hot water taps and leaking appliances, including the relief valve from your water heater.**

Inspecting all components of your hot water system and undertaking repairs when necessary are both important steps to ensuring your water heater is performing well. A relief valve is an important part of this. A relief valve protects storage water heaters by eliminating excess pressure in the hot water system.

However, if you've found your tank is leaking and that a bucket placed under the valve is being filled in just a day, it's a sign that you may need to replace your hot water tank.

## **3. To prevent the growth of bacteria like Legionella, hot water storage systems for residential buildings must be heated to a minimum temperature of 60°C.**

Bacteria like Legionella can be a serious health concern when present at high concentrations in your water. Heating your water at a temperature of over 60°C (in the tank – not at the tap, as per point 1) will help kill any bacteria.

It's for this reason that we don't recommend turning your hot water system off when going away on holidays. However, if you still choose to, ensure that the water is heated and stored above 60°C for at least 35 minutes before using it again. Just be aware that it can take some time to heat to that temperature after having been turned off.

## **4. Maintain your hot water system and have it serviced according to the manufacturer's instructions.**

Regular hot water tank maintenance by a professional Plumber will help prevent issues and problems from occurring while keeping your tank running efficiently. This will give you peace of mind, knowing that your hot water system has been properly serviced.

**Why is it important to follow hot water safety measures?**

While we all love our hot water, observing these safety precautions will help minimise the risk of you and your loved ones from having an accident, and help prevent running out of hot water.

If you're in doubt or have any questions, speak to one of our experts from [O'Brien Electrical and Plumbing](#) can provide you with the peace of mind when it comes to hot water safety.

**Our expert [O'Brien Plumbers & Electricians](#) are here for all of your hot water needs**

We understand how vital it is to have a hot water system that is fully functional and safe.

To make sure your needs are met, we're committed to undertaking quality inspections, performing repairs and installing effective replacements for your home's hot water system.

Call us and we can start discussing your options.

When you call O'Brien Plumbing you can be sure you've called the experts.