



November 14, 2008

Attention: American Water Heater Wholesale Distributors

Subject: Gas Valve Service Trend

We want to apprise you of an unfavorable service trend with certain Robertshaw gas valves which were used on American residential heaters manufactured between September, 2007 and May, 2008 (water heater serial numbers range from 0735 to 0822) The typical consumer call has been "pilot will not hold". The valves contain an ECO (Energy Cut-Off) device which is designed to actuate and interrupt gas flow to the pilot if tank temperature exceeds 190 F degrees. If the ECO actuates, the pilot cannot be re-lit and replacement of the gas valve is necessary to restore the heater.

The ECO device in valves in question may actuate prematurely at normal operating tank temperatures resulting in a valve failure. Since the failure results in a complete shutdown of the water heater, this is not a safety related problem.

On limited occasions, temporary or partial ECO failure has been evidenced and pilots have been reestablished by service providers. However, these heaters soon suffer pilot outage again, requiring service call-back(s) and replacement of the gas valve. Our call centers instruct service agents to replace the gas valves in the affected group, on the first "pilot outage" service call. Please advise your service / repair contractors to do so as well.

Warranty credits for valve replacements are to be handled in normal fashion. We recommend that you increase replacement gas valve inventories to handle these consumer calls as quickly as possible.

We apologize for the inconvenience this problem may have caused you and your customers. We can assure you that gas valves used after May 2008, incorporate an ECO which is in compliance with our specifications. Please direct inquiries relative to Warranty and Service Support to 800-999-9515. To order Replacement Parts call 800-937-1037. For other inquiries, please call your local sales representative, regional sales manager, or my office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Harms".

Jay Harms

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