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*Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times*

## Get Into Hot Water

It takes a lot of energy to make water warm enough to shower with. It isn't unusual for water to enter your home under 50° in the wintertime.

An average shower temperature is 105° so whatever fuel you use to heat water has to raise that temperature over 50° before you step into the shower. An average person uses 17 gallons to shower. Teenagers typically use a few thousand gallons for the same shower. There are numerous ways to heat water. So many that it can be confusing to decide which one to use. The government is incentivizing heat pump water heaters now because they seem to love everything about electricity except using coal and oil for producing it. A heat pump water heater takes heat from your basement and puts it into your water. Your heating system then has to reheat your basement but your furnace gets blamed for using too much fuel, not your water heater. You can also use propane or natural gas and have a tank style water heater.

50 gallon is the most common size but they come in smaller and larger sizes too. With the amount of insulation used on the tanks today there isn't a whole lot of energy lost through the tank sitting there full of hot water. An interesting point is the rating of how much hot water you can get in an hour from each type. That is the only way to compare each fuel. A 50 gallon heat pump water heater can supply 65 gallons in the first hour. That essentially means it can heat 15 gallons in an hour. A regular 50 gallon electric water heater has a first hour rating of 60 gallons. A 50 gallon gas water heater can supply 80 gallons in the first hour. Almost nobody uses oil powered water heaters anymore but you could turn on the hot water and go on vacation and it would still be running hot when you got back a week later. Since no water heater lasts forever you need to take into account the replacement cost. An electric water heater is the least expensive to replace, gas is next, then heat pump, then oil. If you have hard water or acid and heaters don't last, electric is probably the best choice.

Making hot water as part of your heating system is usually not a good idea. It will waste a lot of fuel, especially in the summer. The new tankless gas systems are the exception and I will do a whole article on these soon.

Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email Ken@FieldsService.com

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## Making it Easier for Students of Military Families to Enroll in School

By Rep. Joe Emrick

EASTON - Members of the military make great sacrifices to serve our Commonwealth and our country. It is important we also remember the sacrifices their family members make as a result of their service.

I was honored to support a new state law that will help students in military families enroll in school. Every year, an estimated 185,000 military students move between schools, and this change will make the move less stressful and more orderly for children and parents.

Under the prior law, students of military families who are transferring on official military permanent change-of-station orders are not eligible to register in classes, enroll in specialized academic programs, or submit their children's names in lotteries for charter or magnet schools until they are physically located within the district boundaries. The delay can cause students to miss deadlines, requiring them to shift their planned courses of study and ultimately may force them to take summer classes or even graduate later than expected.

Act 24 of 2023 now allows families to establish residency for purposes of enrollment in the school district in which they will be residing by providing the school district with a copy of their military transfer order. This will allow them to access registration and enrollment at the same time it is open to the general population.

## Need a Gift for an Angler?

By Rep. Joe Emrick

EASTON - Beginning this Friday, Dec. 1, you can purchase a 2024 fishing license for yourself or someone you know from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. In the new year, an annual license

for a Pennsylvania resident will cost \$26 and senior resident annual licenses go for \$12.50. Please click here to make a purchase and check out the full list of license options.

Now is also a good time to mark your 2024 calendars for the statewide opening day of trout season on Saturday, April 1; statewide Mentored Youth Trout Day on Saturday, March 25; and Fish for Free Days on Memorial Day (Monday, May 28) and Thursday, July 4.

