

Water Heater Propane Fix

In an email **Phil Pons, WBCCI # 1057**, writes that he was having trouble with his Attwood hot water heater in his 2006 trailer. It would light with a faint gas glow, but would not stay lit. He called their customer service and was assured that it would be fixed under warranty, but they gave him one last trick to attempt a simpler fix. He was told to dip a (round end) toothpick into isopropyl alcohol and then clean the aperture of the gas jet. Much to his satisfaction, it worked like a charm and the water heater now functions properly.

So the customer service tip is to keep a small bottle of isopropyl alcohol and some tooth picks handy to clear the gas jet of any propane “sediment build up” (customer service term) that reduces gas flow. They indicated this is not uncommon in little used heaters, even though Phil’s was used the month before.

The author has always believed that propane was exceptionally clean burning, so “sediment build-up” does not seem an appropriate cause after a month of nonuse. More likely Phil had a spider web in the gas jet, put there by a very small spider that is attracted by the lingering smell of propane. But whatever the cause, the helpful hint cured the problem Please note that Airstreams with an additional electric heating element may not use their gas water heater enough to avoid these complications. In that case, five minutes of propane use each week would help assure reliable functioning.