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If heavy water is a problem in your home, you may want to look at getting a water softener. A scale in water can create stubborn deposits in plumbing, reducing the flow of water and reducing the lifespan of your equipment. The water softening system uses tiny resin beads to attract and remove calcium and magnesium ions from the water. It is powered by a stream of water, so it won't add to your electricity bill. For more information on plumbing, consider:Bob Vila Radio: Water Filtering 8 Common Water Problems (and Their Medications) Top tips for troubleshooting low water pressure The best way to determine if you have water that would benefit from a softener to have your water professionally tested, although there are DIY testing kits widely available in home centers and hardware stores. Many companies offer to take home sampling kits that you can drop off or mail to have your water assessed for a fee; In municipal water systems, you can contact your local water department to find out the hardness of your water. Water is classified according to milligrams per liter (mg/L) of dissolved calcium carbonate: 0 to 60 mg/L is classified as soft to slightly solid; 61 to 120 mg/L moderately difficult; 121 to 180 mg/l hard; and more than 180 mg/l is very difficult. Related: 14 Home service errors that only take a minute to fix Because heavy water contains dissolved minerals and metals, it can create ugly, stubborn stains on sinks, toilets and baths, and leave white, scaly sediments around the faucets. Short-term stain fix on the fixtures to soak the stain in one cup of bleach and half a cup of powdered dishwasher detergent; To remove the white sediment from the taps, spray with white vinegar, let sit for a few minutes, then rinse and thoroughly wipe with a soft cloth. Related: 7 Common problems with water, and their mineral deposits, known as scale or limescale-can create on pots, coffee pots, kettles, utensils, glassware, and cutlery, leaving a hard, chalky film that is difficult to remove. Worse, scale can create inside appliances that use water, such as dishwashers and washing machines, as well as inside your plumbing system, leading to costly repairs. Related: 9 Signs your tap water can be contaminated, if your utility costs grow, you can check your home's plumbing for signs of scale. Over time, scaling up can clog the pipes, and as it happens, your heating system needs to work harder to push through the water. Also, the accumulation of scale can affect the energy efficiency of boilers and hot water heaters. Related: 14 Ways to save money on water Bill Hard Water makes soap and laundry detergent less effective and can leave behind scummy residues that cause your underwear and clothes to disappear, appear bored or gray, develop a sour smell, and become rough and prickly. Washing clothes and linen in water can also cause premature tissue wear. Related: 12 Laundry Mistakes You are probably making minerals in solid water can leave your skin and hair dry, puff, and itchy, and can also block your skin's pores, causing pimples, acne, or inflammation. Because the soap does not dissolve properly in solid water, sticky soap film can linger on the skin and prevent the removal of bacteria and dirt. The same sticky film can make your hair dry, dull and sluggish. Related: 11 bathroom hazards that harm your home and health One of the most expensive and uncomfortable signs that you need a water softener has your water heater malfunctioning or failing. Heavy water can lead to rapid and premature aging of water heaters, especially electric models, as the heating of solid water accelerates the formation of scale inside the tank, as well as on expensive heating elements of the reservoir. Related: 10 Home Heating Mistakes that spike your bills Thankfully, solving hard water is pretty easy. Installing tiles adds a new dimension to backsplashes and bathrooms, and now even DIYers can achieve professional results. Find out how! A water softener is a device or system that removes calcium, magnesium and other minerals from solid water. Minerals in solid water are built on bath lamps and tiles, clog plumbing systems, leave the skin dry and itchy, affect the efficiency and life of the water heater and leave stains on everything you wash. Typically, water softeners work in the process of exchanging ion to turn heavy water into soft water. Solid waters contain calcium and magnesium, causing a wide range of household problems due to mineral deposits left behind. The ionic water exchange softener uses resin beads placed in the mineral tank to filter the water. Beads have negatively charged ions, while minerals are positively charged with ions. As hard water passes through the mineral pot, resin balls attract solid minerals. The beads then discard sodium ions in exchange for calcium and magnesium ions to make the water soft. Later, the resin beads are cleaned from accumulation with a solution from the brine tank. Summary of how the water softening process works: heavy water comes through the main water pipe. Heavy water flows into the water softener and into a mineral tank containing resin beads. Resin beads collect minerals and replace them with sodium ions that soften water. Captured minerals cling to beads, leaving soft water to flow into the water system. Over time, the resin balls in the water softener are saturated with solid minerals and must be cleaned with the regeneration process to keep the water softening. To wash the accumulated harsh minerals from resin beads requires a strong solution of brine from Accumulated minerals come out through the sewers. Regeneration is either manual or automatic Manual regeneration requires the physical onset of water softeners. If your water softener regenerates automatically, it will either be a term or on-demand regeneration cycle. With the time cycle you will program how often your water softener regenerates. The on-demand cycle will track the amount of water you use and automatically begin the regeneration process as needed. Steps to regenerate water softeners: The reverse flushing cycle changes the flow of water into the tank to clear it of turbidity and other contaminants. A strong brine solution is created in the brine tank and injected into the resin tank to rinse the beads of minerals. The brine solution, which carries solid minerals, flows into a special drainpipe. Slow rinse begins to allow a continuous flow of water to rinse the brine and any remaining solid mineral ions. A quick flow cycle follows to seal the bed resin and wash off the last of the brine and minerals. The brine tank is replenished with water to make it ready for the next maintenance cycle. How long does it take to soften the water for regeneration? A standard water softener should take about 85 to 90 minutes to regenerate. If your water softener takes three or more hours to regenerate or continuously works, even if the water is not used, it may be time to call for repairs. How often should a water softener be restored? As a rule, regeneration can be installed for every two to three days. However, there are several factors that need to be considered when determining when your water softener needs to be replenished. If you have a pool or water your lawn often, you will need more frequent regeneration, maybe even several times a day. For everyday home activities, you don't need as many regenerations. If you have very heavy water, the resin balls in the water softener will become saturated faster than if your water is not particularly difficult. Iron, in particular, can be problematic for water softeners, requiring them to regenerate more often. As your water softener ages, it will require more regeneration. Larger water softeners require less regeneration because they have more resin beads. A water softener that regenerates manually costs about \$400, as well as an additional \$200-\$300 to install. A water softener with a time-time or metered system runs between \$2,000 and \$4,000. Some can cost as much as \$10,000. Factors that affect the average cost of water softeners include the size of the plumbing system, the age of the building, and the number of users. Additional factors affecting water softeners' prices include salt, water and energy needed to work. Salt usually costs only a few dollars per person each month. Water softeners usually use little energy, the cost of feeding them is minimal. How long does water softeners last? The water softener usually lasts from 10 to 15 years. It depends on type, quality, age and You can help provide a long life for your water softener by adhering to best service excellence. Water softeners convert heavy water into soft water. Water conditioner, on the other hand, is a more general term for a water filtration system that removes chlorine and other contaminants. If you find that heavy water causes problems such as the funny taste of water, stains on the dishes or clothes are not completely cleaned, then a water softener can help you. If you want to reduce the amount of chlorine or other contaminants in the water, try looking into the air conditioners. Water air conditioner is a system that alters the chemical structure of water to prevent the formation of minerals of scales, stains and watermarks, but does not remove these minerals. For example, the air conditioner can filter chlorine out of the water to make it more palatable, but it cannot remove calcium or magnesium. A water softener is a water purification system that softens hard water by removing certain chemicals and minerals and replacing them with sodium ions through ion exchange. You can hear about salt-free water softeners. They have certain benefits, but they are not able to remove minerals from solid water. They look more like water conditioners than water softeners. If you want a water softener or air conditioner depends on if you want to actively remove minerals from the solid water. Water softeners offer homeowners a convenient solution to the problems that come with hard water. Water softeners ensure that water is constantly kept soft for flawless bath tiles, sinks and kitchen utensils, cleaner laundry and softer skin and hair. Low operating costs and clear benefits make water softeners a great purchase for any home that has difficult water. Did you find this article useful? Learn more about water treatment systemsREAD OUR GUIDE GUIDE

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