

# INSTALLATION AND OPERATION MANUAL



## DIRECT VENT GAS WATER HEATER MODELS

SW4D Direct Spark Ignition

SW6D Direct Spark Ignition

SW6DE Direct Spark Ignition and Electric Element

SW6DM Direct Spark Ignition and Motor Aid

SW6DEM Direct Spark Ignition, Electric Element, and Motor Aid



FOR INSTALLATION IN RECREATIONAL  
VEHICLES AND MOBILE HOUSING

### FOR YOUR SAFETY

#### WHAT TO DO IF YOU SMELL GAS

- DO NOT TRY TO LIGHT ANY APPLIANCE.
- DO NOT TOUCH ANY ELECTRIC SWITCH: DO NOT USE ANY PHONE IN YOUR VEHICLE.
- IMMEDIATELY CALL YOUR GAS SUPPLIER FROM A NEIGHBOR'S PHONE. FOLLOW THE GAS SUPPLIER'S INSTRUCTIONS.
- IF YOU CANNOT REACH YOUR GAS SUPPLIER, CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

### FREEZE WARNING

DRAIN HEATER IF SUBJECT TO FREEZING TEMPERATURES.

**WARNING:** IMPROPER INSTALLATION, ADJUSTMENT, ALTERATION, SERVICE OR MAINTENANCE CAN CAUSE INJURY OR PROPERTY DAMAGE. REFER TO THIS MANUAL FOR ASSISTANCE OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONSULT A QUALIFIED INSTALLER, SERVICE AGENCY OR THE GAS SUPPLIER.

### FOR YOUR SAFETY

DO NOT STORE OR USE GASOLINE OR OTHER COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS OR LIQUIDS NEAR OR ADJACENT TO THIS HEATER OR ANY OTHER APPLIANCE. THIS APPLIANCE SHALL NOT BE INSTALLED IN ANY LOCATION WHERE FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS OR VAPORS ARE LIKELY TO BE PRESENT.

AN ODORANT IS ADDED TO THE GAS USED BY THIS WATER HEATER.

**INSTALLER:** AFFIX THESE INSTRUCTIONS TO OR ADJACENT TO WATER HEATER.  
**OWNER:** RETAIN THESE INSTRUCTIONS AND WARRANTY FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

ALL TECHNICAL AND WARRANTY QUESTIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE COMPANY LISTED ON THE WARRANTY OR RATING PLATE WHICH CAME WITH YOUR WATER HEATER.



AIRXCEL, INC. - SUBURBAN DIVISION  
676 Broadway Street  
Dayton, Tennessee 37321  
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## INSTALLATION OF MOTOR AID HEAT EXCHANGER

- Place copper "Y"s in heater as shown in Figure 11.
- Secure hoses to "Y"s with hose clamps.
- Attach hose from motor-aid heat exchanger to "Y"s.
- Secure hoses to motor-aid and "Y"s with clamps.
- Check all connections for water leaks and proper water circulation through motor-aid heat exchanger, with engine running.

The system should be checked annually for deterioration of heater hose and hose connections. Replace as needed.

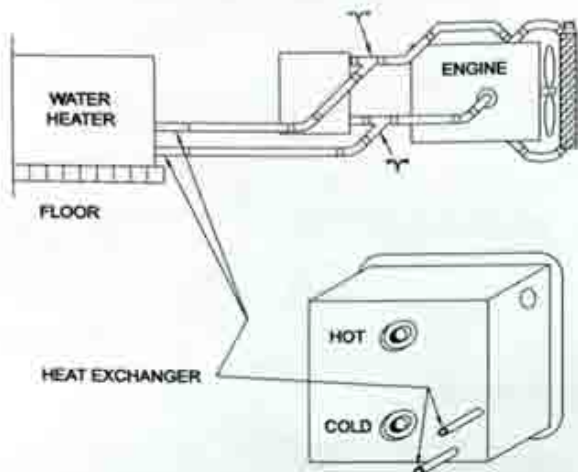


Figure 11

## SAFETY INFORMATION

### FOR YOUR SAFETY READ BEFORE LIGHTING

**WARNING!** If the user of this appliance fails to maintain it in the condition in which it was shipped from the factory or if the appliance is not used solely for its intended purpose or if appliance is not maintained in accordance with the instruction in this manual, then the risk of a fire and/or the production of carbon monoxide exists which can cause personal injury, property damage or loss of life.

### OPERATING AND LIGHTING INSTRUCTIONS

**WARNING!** If you do not follow these instructions exactly, a fire or explosion may result causing property damage, personal injury or loss of life.

**WARNING:** Before operating water heater, be sure tank is filled with water. See "Safety Warnings".

- This appliance does not have a pilot. It is equipped with an ignition device which automatically lights the burner. Do not try to light the burner by hand.
- BEFORE LIGHTING** smell all around the appliance area for gas. Be sure to smell next to the floor because some gas is heavier than air and will settle on the floor.

#### WHAT TO DO IF YOU SMELL GAS

- Do not try to light any appliance.
  - Do not touch any electric switch.
  - Do not use any phone in your building.
  - Immediately call your gas supplier from a neighbor's phone. Follow the gas supplier's instructions.
  - If you cannot reach your gas supplier, call the fire department.
- This is an automatic gas valve, no adjustments are necessary. Do not attempt to repair the gas valve. This may result in a fire or explosion.
  - Do not use this appliance if any part has been under water. Immediately call a qualified service technician to inspect the appliance and to replace any part of the control system and any gas control which has been under water.
  - Before operating water heater, check the location of the vent to make sure it will not be blocked by the opening of any door on the trailer. If it can be blocked, do not operate the water heater with the door open.

## OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

- STOP!** Read the safety information provided.
- Turn off all electric power to the appliance.
- Turn "OFF" gas supply.
- Wait five minutes for gas to clear the area. If you smell gas then **STOP!** Follow instructions in item B of the **SAFETY INFORMATION**. If you don't smell gas go to next step.
- Turn "ON" gas supply.
- Turn on electrical power to the appliance.
- Turn switch that operates the water heater to "ON" position. The switch is illustrated in Figure 12. Your Switch may be different in appearance and is located somewhere inside the RV. If the burner does not light, the system will automatically attempt two more tries for ignition before lock-out. When light remains illuminated, the system is in lockout. **NOTE:** Each ignition cycle will have a 15 second purge before spark cycle if system is a three try system.
- If lockout occurs before main burner lights, the red light on the switch will illuminate indicating ignition did not occur. To reset, turn switch to "OFF", wait five seconds and turn switch to "ON" position. The first start-up of the heater may require several ignition cycles before all air is purged from the gas lines.

If the burner will not come on, the following items should also be checked before calling a service person.

- Switch turned off.
  - Gas supply to heater is empty or turned off.
  - Reset button on ECO is tripped. (See Figure 14)
- If burner fails to light and/or electric element does not operate, call a Suburban service center or a local RV service agency.

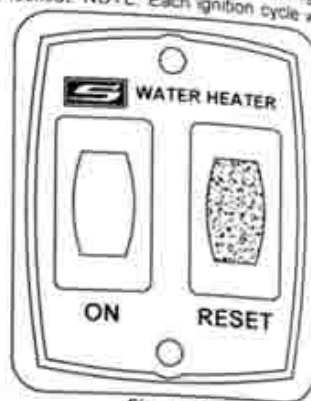


Figure 12

## OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS FOR UNITS WITH ELECTRIC ELEMENT

Electric water heaters are designed to operate with a minimum amount of service problems; however, proper operation and care is essential.

By far the most common trouble with electric water heaters results from energizing the water heater before it is filled with water. Even brief operation of the electric element without water in the tank will burn-out the electric heating element.

To energize the electric heating element, turn the switch to "on". The switch is located behind the water heater door in the lower left corner of the control housing. (See Figure 13) The water temperature will be regulated by the thermostat.

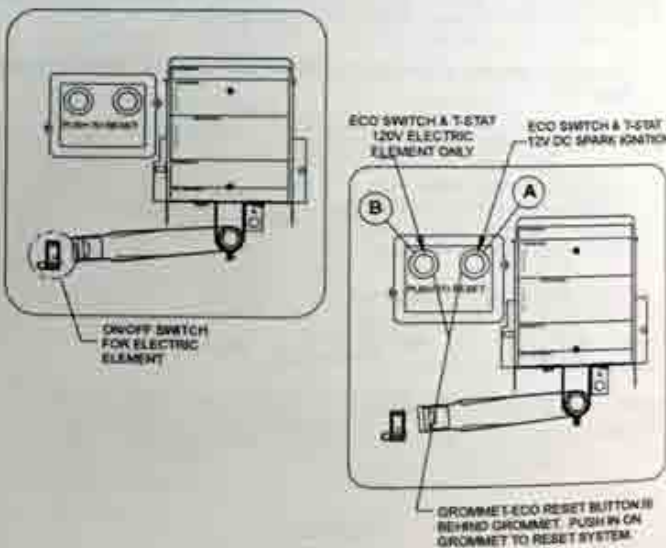


Figure 13



## THERMOSTAT AND MANUAL RESET

MODELS: SW4D, SW6D, and SW6DM

(See Figure 14)

The model water heaters listed above are equipped with a high temperature limit as a cut-off device. Temperature above 180°F will cause manual reset button to trip shutting down main burner.

To activate burner, the water temperature must be below 110°F, push reset button to re-activate burner. ECO reset button for 12 volt DC spark ignition is located behind grommet (A). Push in on grommet (A) to reset system.

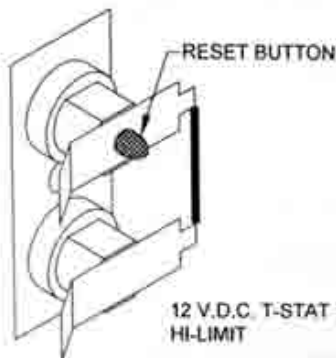


Figure 14

## THERMOSTAT AND MANUAL RESET

MODELS SW6DE and SW6DEM

(See Figure 15)

The model water heaters listed above are equipped with a high temperature limit as a cut-off device. Temperature above 180°F will cause manual reset button to trip shutting down the electric element.

To activate element, the water temperature must be below 110°F, push reset button to re-activate the electric element. ECO reset button for 120 volts AC electric element is located behind grommet (B). Push in on grommet (B) to reset system.

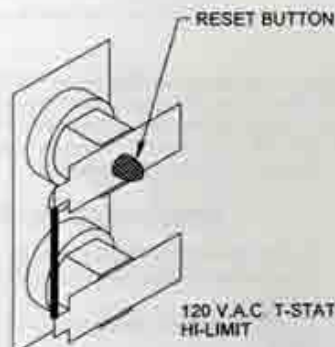


Figure 15

## HIGH ALTITUDE DERATION

Suburban water heaters are certified by nationally recognized testing laboratories for operation without modifications at altitudes up to 4,500 feet. Operation above this elevation may require derating by 4 percent for every 1,000 feet above sea level. For example, at 8,000 feet, the water heater should be derated approximately 32 percent.

If the unit is not properly derated, lack of sufficient oxygen for combustion may produce improper burner operation. Pilot outage caused by burner lift-off or sooting from a yellow burner may occur indicating the possibility of carbon monoxide. You may also notice a lack of efficiency in heating the water because of incomplete combustion of the burner at these higher altitudes.

Consult with the local gas company, your dealer, an RV service agency or Suburban Manufacturing Company for proper derating of the unit. Change-out of the orifice (derating) should be done by the dealer or a qualified service agency.

**NOTE:** It is important that once the unit has returned to lower elevation (below 4,500 feet), this high altitude derating and pilot adjustments (if equipped) be reversed for proper operation of the unit.

## TO TURN OFF WATER HEATER

1. Turn switch to "OFF" position.
2. Turn off electrical power to the appliance.
3. Turn off gas supply.
4. If vehicle is to be stored or heater is going to be turned off while subject to freezing temperature, drain water heater. (See "Draining and Storage Instructions.")

## MAINTENANCE

**WARNING!** If the user of this appliance fails to maintain it in the condition in which it was shipped from the factory or if the appliance is not used solely for its intended purpose or if appliance is not maintained in accordance with the instructions in this manual, then the risk of a fire and/or the production of carbon monoxide exists which can cause personal injury, property damage or loss of life.

**WARNING:** For your safety, all repairs should be performed by your dealer or a qualified service person.

- A. Main Burner:** Do not allow the burner to burn with a yellow flame, because sooting will occur. (See Safety Warnings). If the burner flame is yellow and has an erratic pattern, shut unit down and contact a qualified service agency. Do not continue operating unit with improper burner flame. (See Figure 16 for correct and incorrect burner flame appearance.)
- B. Periodically inspect unit for soot.** If soot is present anywhere on water heater, immediately shut unit down and contact your dealer or a qualified service person. Soot is a sign of incomplete combustion and must be corrected before operating water heater. Areas to check would include:
  1. Check for an obstruction in burner or the flue box.
  2. Check the screen in the door to see that no foreign material has accumulated to prevent flow of combustion and ventilating air.
  3. Check to be sure there is no flame present at burner orifice or burner whenever main gas valve is closed. This can be checked by turning the OFF/ON switch to the "OFF" position.
- C. Frequent checks should be made of the grommet on the gas inlet to assure tight seal.** (See "Making Gas Connections")
- D. Periodically check wiring and wire connection to be sure wiring is not damaged/frayed and that all terminals and connections are tight and in compliance with codes.** (See "Making Wire Connections")

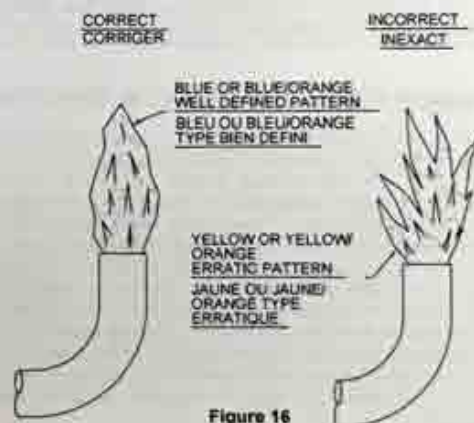


Figure 16

## DRAINING AND STORAGE INSTRUCTIONS

If RV is to be stored during winter months, the water heater must be drained to prevent damage from freezing.

1. Turn off electrical power to water heater either at the switch from the electrical element or a breaker.
2. Shut off gas supply to water heater.
3. Turn off pressure pump on water system.
4. Open both hot and cold water faucets.
5. Remove anode rod from tank.
6. Follow RV manufacturer's instructions for draining entire water system.

**NOTE:** Be certain to refill water heater with water and remove all air from tank and lines before re-lighting or before turning on electrical power.

## WINTERIZING

If your water heater plumbing system is equipped with a bypass kit, use it to close off the water heater, drain the water heater completely and leave the water heater closed off (out of the system) in the bypass position *particularly* if you are introducing antifreeze into the plumbing system. Antifreeze can be very corrosive to the anode rod creating premature failure and heavy sediment in the tank. If the plumbing system is not equipped with a bypass kit, and you intend to winterize by adding antifreeze to the system, remove the anode rod (storing it for the winter) and replace it with a 3/4" drain plug.



## ANODE PROTECTION

The tank in this water heater is protected by a magnesium or aluminum anode to prolong the life of the tank by absorbing the corrosive action of hot water. Under normal use, the anode rod will deteriorate and because of this, we recommend it be replaced yearly. **NOTE:** Water with high levels of iron and/or sulfate will increase the rate of deterioration; therefore, more frequent replacement may be required. If anode rod is mostly eaten away, replace it with a new one (See Figure 17).

To prevent a water leak when replacing the anode rod, a pipe thread sealant approved for potable water (such as Teflon Tape) must be applied to the threads of the anode rod. Proper application of a thread sealant will not interfere with the anode's tank protection.

Operating the water heater without proper anode protection will decrease tank life and will void your warranty on the tank. **NOTE:** Tank is drained by removing anode rod (See "Drain and Storage" instructions).

To extend anode life, drain water from tank whenever RV is not being used. Avoid any extended time of non use with water in tank.

Also, refer to section on winterizing.



Figure 17

**WARNING!** Do not replace the anode rod with any non-Suburban accessory part, such as an "add-on" electric heating element. Items such as these are not approved to be installed in Suburban products. They could create an unsafe condition and will also void all warranties.

## ODOR FROM HOT WATER SYSTEM

Odor from the hot water system is not a service problem and many water supplies contain sufficient amounts of sulphur to produce an odor. The odor is similar to rotten eggs and is often referred to as "sulphur water". It is not harmful - only unpleasant to smell. Sulphur water can be caused by a chemical action or by bacteria. The solution to eliminate is chlorination of the water system. Add about six (6) ounces of chlorinated common household liquid bleach to each 10 gallons in the water tank. Then run the chlorinated water throughout the system, opening each faucet one at a time until you smell the chlorine. Let the RV sit for a few days and the chlorine should take care of the problem. Then you will need to take care of the chlorine. Remove the chlorine by flushing the system with fresh water. This may take several attempts. You may consider adding a filtering system that removes chlorine and prevents sulphur water. If the sulphur or rotten egg smell continues, flush the system once again as described above and replace anode rod as necessary.

## PRESSURE RELIEF VALVE

The temperature and pressure relief valve is designed to open if the temperature of the water within the heater reaches 210°F, or if the water pressure in the heater reaches 150 pounds. Recreational vehicle water systems are closed systems and during the water heating cycle the pressure build-up in the water system will reach 150 pounds. When this pressure is reached, the pressure relief valve will open and water will drip from the valve. This dripping will continue until the pressure is reduced to below 150 pounds, and the valve closes. This condition is normal and does not indicate a defective relief valve.

**WARNING!** Do not place a valve between the relief valve and the tank. Do not plug the relief valve under any circumstances.

## WATER WEEPING OR DRIPPING FROM PRESSURE RELIEF VALVE

You may experience water weeping or dripping from your water heater's Pressure and Temperature (P & T) Relief Valve when your water heater is operating. Water weeping or dripping from the P & T Valve does not always mean the P & T Valve is defective. As water is heated, it expands. The water system in a recreational vehicle is a closed system and does not allow for the expansion of heated water. When the pressure of the water system exceeds the relieving point of the P & T Valve, the valve will relieve the excess pressure.

Suburban recommends that a check valve not be installed directly at the inlet to the water heater tank. This will increase weeping of the pressure relief valve.

**WARNING!** Do not remove or plug the relief valve.

One way to reduce the frequency of this occurrence is to maintain an air pocket at the top of the water heater tank. This air pocket will form in the tank by design. However, it will be reduced over time by the everyday use of your water heater.

To replenish this air pocket:

1. Turn off water heater.
2. Turn off cold water supply line.
3. Open a faucet in the RV.
4. Pull out on the handle of the Pressure Relief (P & T) Valve and allow water to flow from the valve until it stops.
5. Release handle on P & T Valve - it should snap closed.
6. Close faucet and turn on cold water supply, as the tank fills, the air pocket will develop.

Repeat this procedure as often as needed to reduce the frequency of the weeping of the P & T Valve. If the weeping persists after following this procedure, you may elect to install an expansion or accumulator tank in the cold water line between the tank and check valve to relieve the pressure caused by thermal expansion. Contact your local dealer for assistance.

## REMOVING WATER HEATER

1. Shut off gas supply and disconnect gas supply line from water heater.
2. On all Electric Models, disconnect 120 V.A.C. supply at junction box mounted on heater.
3. On all DSI Models, disconnect 12 V.D.C. power supply at junction box on heater.
4. On Models SW4D, SW6D and SW6DE disconnect all wires at module board.
5. Shut off water supply. Drain water from tank following instructions under "Draining and Storage".
6. Disconnect hot and cold water lines from water heater.
7. Remove screws or nails securing control housing to framed opening.
8. Slide heater out. To reinstall, follow instructions in manual under "Installation Instructions".

## PARTS AND SERVICE

Contact a conveniently located recommended Suburban Service Center. Describe to them the nature of your problem, make an appointment, if necessary, and provide for delivery of your RV with the appliance installed.

To obtain information on locating a local service agency, contact:

AIRXCEL, Inc. Suburban Division  
Customer Service Department  
676 Broadway Street  
Dayton, TN 37321  
(423) 775-2131 Ext. 7101  
[www.RVComfort.com](http://www.RVComfort.com)



## TWO YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY SUBURBAN RECREATIONAL VEHICLE WATER HEATER

### TWO YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY

This Suburban product is warranted to the original purchaser to be free from defects in material and workmanship under normal use and maintenance for a period of two years from date of purchase whether or not actual use begins on that date. It is the responsibility of the consumer/owner to establish the warranty period. Suburban does not use warranty registration cards for its standard warranty. You are required to furnish proof of purchase date through a Bill of Sale or other payment records.

Suburban will replace any parts that are found defective within the first two years and will pay a warranty service allowance directly to the recommended Suburban Service Center at rates mutually agreed upon between Suburban and its recommended service centers. Replacement parts will be shipped FOB the shipping point within the Continental United States, Alaska and Canada to the recommended service center performing such repairs. All freight, shipping and delivery costs shall be the responsibility of the owner. The exchanged part or unit will be warranted for only the unexpired portion of the original warranty. Before having warranty repairs made, confirm that the service agency is a recommended service center for Suburban. **DO NOT PAY THE SERVICE AGENCY FOR WARRANTY REPAIRS; SUCH PAYMENTS WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED.**

Suburban reserves the right to examine the alleged defect in the water heater or component parts, and it is the owner's obligation to return the water heater and/or component parts to Suburban or its representative. When returning a water heater, it must include all component parts and the serial number plate. Returned component parts must be individually tagged and identified with the water heater's model number, serial number and date of installation.

For warranty service, the owner/user should contact the nearest recommended Suburban Service Center, advising them of the model and serial numbers (located on the water heater) and the nature of the defect. Transportation of the RV to and from the Service Center and/or travel expenses of the Service Center to your location is the responsibility of the owner/user. A current listing of recommended service center may be obtained from Suburban's website: [www.rvcomfort.com](http://www.rvcomfort.com). If you cannot locate a recommended service center locally, the service agency chosen to perform warranty repairs must contact our Service Department at 423-775-2131 for authorization before making repairs. Unauthorized repairs made will not be paid by Suburban.

### THREE YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY ON TANK

The inner tank is further warranted to be free from defects in material and workmanship during the third year after the date of original purchase. A replacement water heater will be provided under the same conditions as stated in the two year warranty EXCEPT no labor reimbursement will be provided.

### LIMITATION OF WARRANTIES

ALL IMPLIED WARRANTIES (INCLUDING IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY) ARE HEREBY LIMITED IN DURATION TO THE PERIOD FOR WHICH EACH LIMITED WARRANTY IS GIVEN. SOME STATES DO NOT ALLOW LIMITATIONS ON HOW LONG AN IMPLIED WARRANTY LASTS SO THE ABOVE LIMITATIONS MAY NOT APPLY TO YOU. THE EXPRESSED WARRANTIES MADE IN THIS WARRANTY ARE EXCLUSIVE AND MAY NOT BE ALTERED, ENLARGED, OR CHANGED BY ANY DISTRIBUTOR, DEALER OR OTHER PERSON WHOMSOEVER.

### SUBURBAN WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

1. Normal maintenance as outlined in the installation, operating and service instructions owner's manual including cleaning of component parts and cleaning or replacement of the burner orifice. Any water damage arising, directly or indirectly, from any defect in the water heater or component parts or from its use.
2. Initial checkouts and subsequent checkouts which indicate the water heater is operating properly, or diagnosis without repair.
3. Damage or repairs required as a consequence of faulty or incorrect installation or application not in conformance with Suburban instructions.
4. Failure to start and/or operate due to loose or disconnected wires; water or dirt in controls, fuel lines and gas tanks; improper gas pressure; low voltage.
5. Cleaning or adjustment of components; electrode, burner tube, pilot and thermocouple.
6. Costs incurred in gaining access to the water heater.
7. Parts or accessories not supplied by Suburban.
8. Freight charges incurred from parts replacements.
9. Damage or repairs needed as a consequence of any misapplication, abuse, unreasonable use, unauthorized alteration, improper service, improper operation or failure to provide reasonable and necessary maintenance.
10. Suburban products whose serial number has been altered, defaced or removed.
11. Suburban products installed or warranty claims originating outside the Continental U.S.A., Alaska, Hawaii and Canada.
12. Damage as a result of floods, winds, lightning, accidents, corrosive atmosphere or other conditions beyond the control of Suburban.
13. ANY SPECIAL, INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL PROPERTY, ECONOMIC OR COMMERCIAL DAMAGE OF ANY NATURE WHATSOEVER.

Some states do not allow the exclusion of incidental or consequential damages, so the above limitation may not apply to you.

NO REPRESENTATIVE, DEALER, RECOMMENDED SERVICE CENTERS OR OTHER PERSON IS AUTHORIZED TO ASSUME FOR SUBURBAN MANUFACTURING COMPANY ANY ADDITIONAL, DIFFERENT OR OTHER LIABILITY IN CONNECTION WITH THE SALE OF THIS SUBURBAN PRODUCT.

This warranty gives you specific legal rights, and you may also have other rights which vary from state to state.

### IF YOU HAVE A PRODUCT PROBLEM

**FIRST:** If your RV has its original water heater and is still under the RV manufacturer's warranty, follow the steps suggested by your dealer or manufacturer of the RV.

**SECOND:** Contact a conveniently located recommended Suburban Service Center. Describe to them the nature of your problem, make an appointment, if necessary, and provide for delivery of your RV to the selected service center.

**THIRD:** For the location of the nearest Service Center, refer to the listing provided or contact:

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[www.RVComfort.com](http://www.RVComfort.com)

### FOR FUTURE REFERENCE, YOU SHOULD RECORD THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

MODEL NUMBER	_____
SERIAL NUMBER	_____
STOCK NUMBER	_____
DATE OF PURCHASE	_____

