

Gas Pool Heater Buyer's Guide

Swimming pool gas heaters are available in natural gas and propane gas models, by every major pool equipment manufacturer, and also by a few independents. Pool and Spa heaters are available in Low-Nox models to meet air quality standards in Texas and California, and also available with Cupro-Nickel heat exchangers for greater resistance to salt or low pH conditions. ASME certified heaters for commercial pools are also available.

Gas pool heaters are designed in two ways, with several burners laid horizontally across the bottom of the firebox, they heat the air space below the heat exchanger, rows of copper or Cupro-nickel tubes that circulate the water. An alternate design uses a stack of coiled heat exchanger tubes, wrapping around a single burner in the center of the heater.

Below is a description and summary of the features and benefits for the most popular gas pool and spa heaters that are available for the post-modern pool owner.

Raypak Digital Pool Heaters



Raypak is the oldest independent pool heater manufacturer in North America, and is now part of the Rheem company. In certain markets, the Raypak Digital pool heater is labeled and sold as Rheem or Rudd, but is the same exact pool heater.

Raypak Digital pool heaters have led the industry in technological advancements. The first to offer Capron thermoplastic headers and completely corrosion free waterways with stainless steel tube sheets or end plates. The first to create a condensation free heater by optimizing water flow and water temperature and the first to add CPVC unions for fast and easy plumbing connections.

Raypak Digital Gas Heater Features:

- Heavy Gauge 12 Ga Steel Panels with PolyTuf™ Textured Powder Coating.
- Corrosion Free Waterways. Copper, SS and Capron Thermoplastics – No Rust.
- Condensation Free Heat Exchanger. Sensors prevent soot, scale and condensation.
- Wind resistant Design. Fans & Blowers are not needed to combat drafting issues.
- Precise Flame Control. With dozens of small flame burners, heat is even and efficient.

Hayward Universal H-Series Pool Heaters



Hayward needs little introduction, a well-known pool equipment manufacturer, it began to focus attention on swimming pools in 1964, when Robert & Oscar Davis purchased the company from the founder Irving Hayward.

Hayward was the first pool company to begin manufacturing pool pumps from a polymer plastic, and found great success in the Max-Flo, Power-Flo and Superpump models. Before Hayward, pool pumps were made of brass and bronze; heavy and expensive.

Hayward purchased the Comfortzone pool heater company in 1990, and released the first Hayward branded pool heaters in 1992.

Hayward Universal H-Series Heater Features:

- Commercial Grade Cupro-Nickel Heat Exchanger is resistant to Salt and low pH.
- Universal Wiring 115V or 230V, on both left and right sides of the heater.
- Low Nox Emission is precisely controlled with vents and air blower.
- Lightest weight in its class with a small footprint and low profile.
- Forced Draft air system eliminates outside weather variables.

Jandy Lxi Pool Heaters



Jandy is also a well-known swimming pool equipment manufacturer, now owned by Zodiac. Jandy pool cleaners were the first on the market in the 1950's, and the 3-way Jandy valve literally revolutionized pool plumbing when it was introduced.

Jandy has many firsts in the pool industry, but they never actually made pool heaters. A sister company Teledyne Laars, a major player in pool heating who was looking to divest assets, sold off Laars pool heaters, which became Laars-Jandy pool heaters, and eventually shortened to Jandy pool heaters.

Jandy Lxi pool heaters bring a legacy of technology and innovation from over 50 years of manufacturing. Smaller, lighter and faster than predecessors, the digital Lxi heater is packed with features.

Jandy Lxi Pool Heater Features:

- Fully Digital Control Circuit for reliable operation.
- Cupro Nickel heat exchanger for salt & scale resistance.
- Redesigned In/Out Header improves flow hydraulics.
- Extra-large access doors and panels allow for easy service.
- Feature rich control panel and built-in Jandy controller integration.

Pentair MasterTemp Pool Heaters



Like the other brands mentioned above, Pentair Water is one of the largest pool equipment manufacturers in the world, and like Hayward and Jandy, they needed a gas fired pool heater to complete their line of pool equipment.

Hydrotech was one of the first pool heater manufacturers in the United States and when Pentair purchased Purex pool products, they acquired the technology for the Purex Minimax pool heater, made by Hydrotech at the time.

The Minimax pool heater is still available, but the Pentair flagship pool heater is the Pentair MasterTemp pool heater, which uses technology borrowed from StaRite, which Pentair also owns.

Pentair MasterTemp Pool Heater Features:

- Ultra Efficiency (84%) from pre-mixed air/gas system
- Rotating Top allows you to place the controls where most convenient.
- Single Cabinet for all heater sizes, measures just 21"x21"x28" tall.
- Rustproof composite thermoplastic exterior, no steel surfaces.
- Certified Low Nox emissions exceeds industry standard.

StaRite Max-E-Therm Pool Heaters



StaRite really broke the mold when they created the Max-E-Therm pool heater. It was said that Sta-Rite refused to manufacture a pool heater, until they could make it completely out of plastic.

Sta-Rite had developed their DynaGlas plastics to a point where it would withstand heat and by creating a circular heat exchanger of stacked round copper tubes, with a single central burner, they were able to create the Max-E-Therm heater, entirely out of space age plastics.

The rocket ship shape, stacked heat exchanger and single central burner is a radical departure from the box style combustion chambers used on every other heater. Scoffed at by pool guys at first, the idea has caught fire, used in the MasterTemp heater (above) and the Jandy Jxi pool heater.

StaRite Max-E-Therm Pool Heater Features:

- Super tough thermoplastic exterior made from DynaGlas resins.
- Rotating top allows for convenient location of control panel.
- Removable Top exposes the entire heater for easy interior access.
- Low Profile in/out header union connections for simple installation.
- So safe, Max-E-Therm can be placed on a combustible surface.