

Warranty Pitfalls

The manufacturer's warranty on any product is written in such vague language that most consumers skim the words without understanding their meaning. And yet, the warranty is one of the single most important part of your spa purchase. Without a good warranty, consumers who have problems with their tubs in the first five years are angry and disappointed that more time wasn't spent explaining the warranty. How deep you want to go in making sense of the warranty is up to you.

Clearwater Spas

Dealer Locator

How long is your warranty?

SPA SENSE

PRODUCT INFORMATION GUIDE



Tel:

What is the Warranty?

Warranties will differ by manufacturer.

Washington state, like many other states, is a “Buyers Beware” state. Basically, this means that you get what you pay for and the manufacturer doesn’t have to do what you think is right. Take the time to learn the specifics of the warranty for any spa you are considering.

The spa warranty covers the materials and the workmanship of the spa. As a result, the warranty is only as good as the materials. The components made from wood (which has no warranty) are not made to last in the wet spa environment. Products made from plastic or steel can virtually last forever.



20 Year components are shell only (not including equipment or options)

TWO-PART WARRANTY

The majority of spa manufacturers offer two-part shell warranties on their products. Two-part warranties are so named because the structural materials in use are not specifically designed to adhere to acrylic.

Fiberglass reinforcement is used by 80% of spa manufacturers. Fiberglass is applied in a roll-on process. Contaminants can easily get between the layers of fiberglass. Over time, bubbles form in the shell. Manufacturers who use fiberglass reinforcements know that this happens, and therefore, they do not offer a long warranty on their products. Instead, their customers are likely to run into problems soon after warranty expiration, and are faced with the choice of paying for costly repairs or buying a whole new spa.

Using a urethane foam and filling the majority of the cabinet with it also creates problems. The foam encapsulates the structural components of the spa. Typically, these components are wood. The moisture attacks the wood and rotting takes place. Again, wood has no warranty.

Consequently, a two-part warranty splits the shell warranty into two parts: the surface and the structure. In addition, the spa warranties are typically prorated. If the warranty says it’s good for five years, that may mean you have 100% coverage the first two years, with the percentage of coverage dropping each subsequent year.

It’s also important to know that spa warranties typically do not cover the cabinet or wood support structure. The spa’s weight, especially when filled with water, puts extreme pressure on the wood substructure. When any portion of the wood substructure fails, extreme stress is passed to the spa shell, which can result in stress cracks and shell failure.

All in all, most warranties do not cover what

you are lead to believe, so be careful. When shopping for a new spa, you want to be assured that if there is ever a problem, you will be taken care of.

Here are some questions to ask when shopping for a spa:

- 1) What is the spa shell warranty?
- 2) What is the warranty of the materials that hold up the spa shell?
- 3) What is the warranty if the spa sits on the ground?

A warranty can give you a false sense of security. Make sure you know exactly what it covers. While you’re at it, make sure you know exactly what materials make up that shiny new spa you’ve been eyeing. Equally important is “Who is covering the warranty?” and “How long has the company been in business?” If it is a newer company, do they have service capabilities?

Shell of spa before drilling.



“It has been my personal vision over the past 29 years to design and build spas that re-define the industry.”

Ronald Clearwater