

Thermostatic Shower Faucet Upgrade

Original Shower Control

Our plastic shower control was starting to get dull and grungy so I started looking for a replacement. I have long been annoyed at the constant need to adjust the temperature when turning the flow off and back on. In addition, at least in my coach, when running under pump power, as the pump turns on and off during a shower, the temperature goes up and down as the pressure changes.



While looking for a replacement RV shower control valve I came across a YouTube video of using a thermostatic mixing valve instead that would maintain a constant water temperature regardless of water pressure. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5vy1Nxvc-Y>

Thermostatic Shower Control

Almost all of the Thermostatic shower valves I came across were manufactured in Europe. The spacing of the supply lines in most American shower faucets is 4 inches and in Europe the spacing is 15 CM, or about 6 inches. What I settled on is a Solid Brass Thermostatic Shower Control for under \$40. There are several similar units available to choose from.



Faucet Control Settings

Operationally, they differ from non-thermostatic controls in that, instead of Hot and Cold control valves, they use the left control for Water Flow and the right control for Temperature. The Flow control operates from no flow to full flow. The temperature control can be left at a comfortable setting and it will always go to the same temperature every time you use the shower. The temperature remains constant regardless of water pressure as long as you have hot water in the tank. There is a red stop button to prevent accidentally getting scalding hot water but if you press the button in you can bypass the safety for hotter water. Being European, the temperature setting is in Celsius. 38° Celsius would be 100° Fahrenheit.

Flow Control



Temperature Control



Installing the Thermostatic Shower Control

If you watch the video link posted above you will see that RV's situation, the faucet plumbing is accessed from the front of the shower. In my Coach, there is an access panel in the bedroom where I could reach the plumbing connections behind the shower wall. In some coaches, the connections might be behind a mirror on the other side of the wall.

Because my faucet was slightly recessed in the shower wall I wanted to find out how big and how deep that recess was. I also wanted to verify that the new wider plumbing connections would fit where the existing 4 inch connections were. I also checked to make sure I could disconnect the old faucet and connect the new faucet behind the shower wall.



Now that I knew I could remove and replace the faucet I needed to find some kind of 'filler' to address the ¼ inch depression in the shower wall and to cover the new 6 inch wide hole spacing for the new plumbing connections. I settled on using an inexpensive Teflon kitchen cutting board for the cover plate.

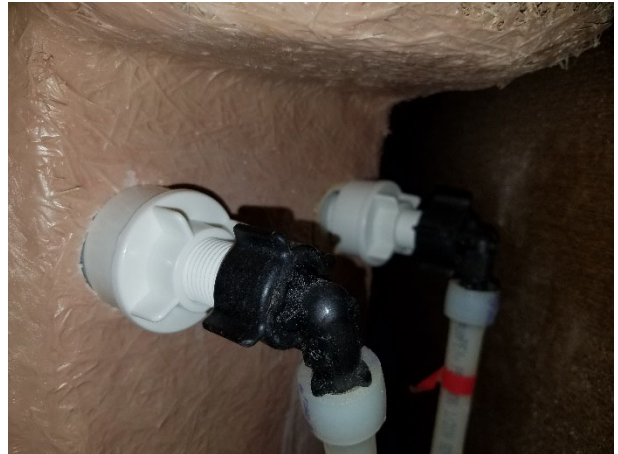


I cut the Teflon board in half lengthwise, keeping the subtle curve on top and sanding to match the curve on the bottom of the board. Using the thermostatic faucet plumbing connections, I cut matching holes in the board. I could then use the board to measure and cut matching holes in the shower wall.



Final Assembly

With the faucet attached to the mounting plate, I test fitted the plumbing connections. With a little trimming here and there, adhesive caulk was used between the mounting plate and the shower wall for a water tight seal. Once the plumbing connections were secured, a water test was done before closing up the access panel.



Before and After



This has become one of the most pleasurable projects we've completed and with the Oxygeneics Shower Head, one of the best shower experiences I have had in an RV.

