Jeff and Ellen Markel bought their 1994-built home in Lititz, Penn., a little more than two years ago. Since then, they've updated nearly all of the house's mechanical systems. In May 2009, it came time to replace the home's two water heaters.

"With just the two of us, we knew that we'd never use all the hot water the two tanks were generating," Ellen said. "We were actually quite bothered by the amount of energy we were wasting by keeping the tanks running, but we had no way to shut one of them off."

So, when the Markels called on Haller Enterprises, Inc., with their energy concerns, the contractor recommended the natural gas, condensing Vertex™ water heater from A. O. Smith.

"We've had a lot of success with the A. O. Smith Vertex model," said John Michel, vice president of Haller’s service and retrofit division. "We frequently recommend and install it because its 96% efficiency is able to save the homeowner so much money."

The power-direct-vent Vertex, with a top-mounted down-fire pre-mix burner and a patented glass-lined helical coil heat exchanger, operates at an industry-leading 96% thermal efficiency, using energy more efficiently to heat water. In comparison, most standard and tankless water heaters
operate at 80% thermal efficiency or less, meaning at least 20 cents of every dollar spent on energy to heat water is wasted.

“After Haller installed the Vertex, we were pleased to see that one water heater really could replace two,” Ellen said. “To test it out, my husband and I ran water all over the house at the same time, and the Vertex was able to keep up and make plenty of hot water.”

After the Vertex was installed, the Markels began to notice their gas bill reflected a significant decrease in usage. At first, the Markels attributed it to the time of year. Not long after, they received a letter from their gas company asking to arrange a time to test their meter. The utility company had also noticed the decrease and assumed the meter wasn’t working properly.

“When I called the gas company to schedule the appointment, I mentioned that we’d replaced our two water heaters with a Vertex and asked if that could explain our drop in usage,” Ellen said. “We were pleased to see our decision to replace the older units validated when the gas company simply noted our change of water heater in their system and no longer wished to verify that our meter was working.”

The success of the Vertex model is a frequent occurrence for Haller, which installs three to four units a week. “The Vertex works exactly like we want it to—it saves the homeowners money and is an easy installation for us,” John said. “It just seems to be a home run for everyone.”

Please visit www.aosmithconnect.com for additional information.