

## **Annual Maintenance Checklist for Tank-Style Water Heaters**

### **Before you begin**

- Shut off power to the heater (electric: turn off breaker; gas: set to "Pilot" or "Off" and close gas supply valve).
- If possible, allow the tank to cool down to reduce scald risk.

### **1. Inspect Valves, Pipes & Joints**

- Check the Temperature & Pressure (T&P) relief valve for correct operation.
- Check the cold-water shut-off and drain valves for leaks or corrosion.
- Inspect all visible piping and joints; use soapy water (on gas lines) or visual watch for drips.
- Verify the water pressure is within recommended limits (typically 40-60 psi) if applicable.

### **2. Flush Sediment from the Tank**

- Connect a hose to the drain valve and drain a few gallons (or more) to remove accumulated sediment.
- Flushing helps maintain efficiency and extends tank life.

### **3. Check & Possibly Replace the Anode Rod**

- The anode rod protects the tank from corrosion; inspect it for depletion or heavy wear.
- Depending on water quality and usage, the rod may need replacement every 3-5 years.

### **4. Refill and Purge Air from the System**

- After draining, close the drain valve, reopen the cold-water supply to refill the tank.
- Open a hot-water faucet for 3-5 minutes to purge trapped air.

- Once full and air expelled, restore power or restart gas burner according to manufacturer specs.

## 5. Inspect for External Issues & Safety Hazards

- Check for rust or corrosion on the tank surface, base, or venting components.
- For gas/propane models: inspect vent pipe, flue, combustion air intake, and look for signs of back-drafting.
- Ensure adequate clearance around the tank, no combustibles stored nearby.
- Verify insulation (if applicable) and that the system is plumbed in accordance with local codes.

## 6. Review Temperature Settings & Safety Devices

- Confirm thermostat setting is appropriate (e.g., around 120-125 °F for safety and efficiency, though local conditions may vary).
- Test the T&P relief valve: lift the lever a bit to let water flow, then let it snap back—verify it reseals correctly.
- If you live in a climate where bacteria risk is significant (e.g., Legionella), ask a licensed plumbing contractor whether a mixing/tempering valve or higher storage temp with tempering is appropriate.

## 7. Document & Schedule Next Check

- Record date and any findings or parts replaced (e.g., anode rod changed).
- Set a reminder or service contract for next annual inspection.
- If any issues (leaks, corrosion, venting problems) were found, schedule a licensed technician promptly.

---

## Additional Notes

- If your home has **well water**, the maintenance demands may increase: higher mineral content, sediments and bacteria can accelerate corrosion or anode wear.

# TrustedHotWater.com

---

- **Gas, propane or combined electric/gas systems** should have a licensed professional inspect them periodically to ensure safe operation and code compliance.