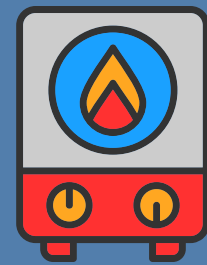


Legionella:

Hot Water Heater



- **Electric water heaters** have a heating element that sits slightly above the bottom of the heater. This creates a layer of cooler water at the bottom of the tank that can be the perfect temperature for *Legionella* growth.
- **Gas and oil water heaters** heat from the bottom up and do not have layers of cooler water at the bottom.

Maintaining your water heater:



Set the water heater temperature

- If your water heater has a tank, set your heater to 140 degrees Fahrenheit to reduce the growth of *Legionella*.
- To better reduce *Legionella* growth, the temperature leaving the faucet should be at or above 120 degrees F.
 - However, this temperature is very hot and can scald (burn) skin.
 - To help prevent scalding, you can install point-of-use mixing to control the water temperature at the showerhead or faucet. **Contact a plumber if you don't know how to do this.**



Flush the water heater tank when needed

- **It isn't always possible to drain your water heater tank.**
- If possible, emptying and refilling (flushing) the water tank is a good practice. **You can hire a plumber to do this for you.**
- Completely flush (empty and refill) your water heater:
 - when you return after a week-long or more vacation
 - before you move into a home
 - after plumbing work
 - if your hot water is discolored

Steps to flush your water heater tank:

- ☐ Turn off the gas or electricity to the water heater.
- ☐ Open a **hot water** faucet in the home and run the water for about 10 minutes to reduce the water temperature in the tank.
- ☐ Attach a garden hose to the existing drain valve and route it to a floor drain.
- ☐ With the cold water valve open to drain the tank, open the drain valve.
 - **Please use caution**, as sediment can build up within the water tank and can clog the drain line or valve.
- ☐ Follow the manufacturer's procedure for restarting your hot water heater.