LA DWP Los Angeles Department of Water & Power

Water heaters should be flushed at least once a year to control the build-up of mineral deposits. This will help the water heater operate more efficiently and may help extend the life of the heater.

Water heaters should also be flushed if you notice the hot water turning a yellowish or brownish color or if it contains a sand-like material. These changes can be caused by the accumulation of rust or mineral sediments.
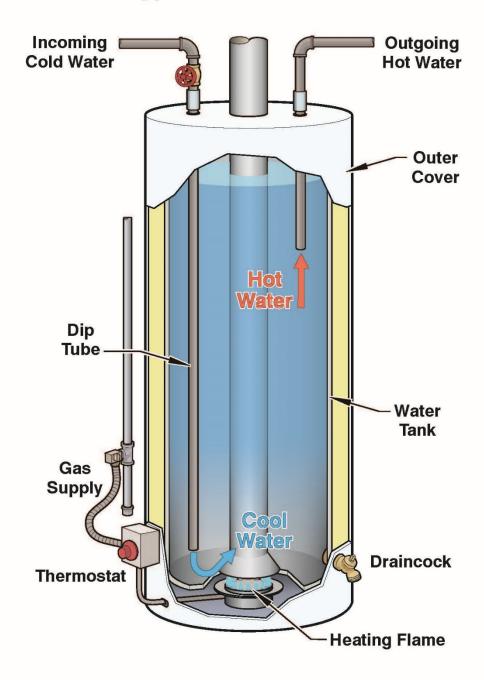
The procedure for flushing your water heater is outlined in the following steps:

Step	Description
1	Attach a garden hose to the draincock located at the bottom of the heater. The draincock usually looks like a regular hose bib (garden faucet) or a round dial with a threaded hole in the middle. ***Note: Do not shut off the gas or the water supply to the heater.***
2	Extend the garden hose to a place where the water can safely exit the heater (e.g. a drain, a driveway)
3	Open the draincock to allow the water to exit the heater. ***Caution: If the draincock is made of plastic and the heater is several years old, it may be difficult to open and may break easily if forced.*** ***Caution: The water draining out will be hot and under normal household water pressure.***
4	After five minutes of flushing, fill a bucket with the flushing water.
5	Allow the water in the bucket to stand undisturbed for a minute and see if the water is clear or if any sand-like material settles to the bottom. • If the water is clear and no sand-like material is observed, go on to step 6. • If the water is discolored and/or sand-like material is observed at the bottom of the bucket, repeat steps 4 and 5 until the flush water is completely clear and free of sediment.
6	Close the draincock and remove the garden hose.

If you do not feel comfortable doing this work yourself, please hire a licensed plumber.

Typical Water Heater

Incoming Cold Water

Outgoing Hot Water

Outer Cover

Hot Water

Dip Tube

Water Tank

Gas Supply

Cool Water

Thermostat

Draincock

Heating Flame