

# **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) About Southern NV Water Heater Maintenance**

**Gil Mars**

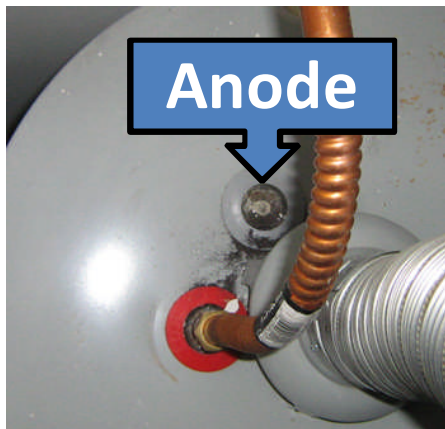
**Sun City Anthem Member, April 7, 2009**

# Benefits of Presentation

- Reduce chances of a **surprise** water heater failure
- Show how to recognize problems
- Describe self-maintenance options
- Extend life of LV water heaters from **4 to over 8 years**
- Save **\$750-\$1,500** of premature water heater replacement costs plus major energy savings

# FAQ # 1: What Is An “Anode Rod”?

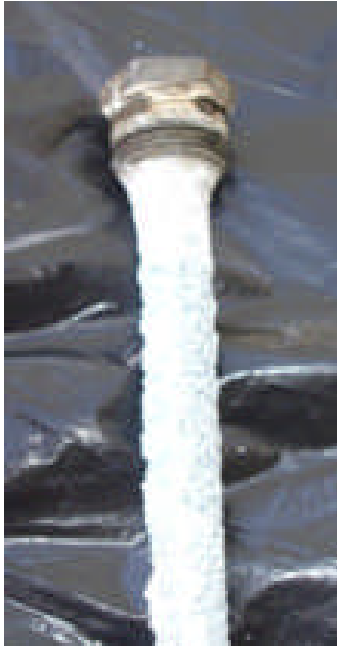
- Sacrificial Metal (Steel Core) Rod, 3-4 feet long
- Factory inserted in **top** of **iron** tanks (Not Stainless)
- Attracts hard water minerals (LV = 8.2 Alkaline)
- Dissolves **before** the tank does



# FAQ # 2: When To Replace Anodes?

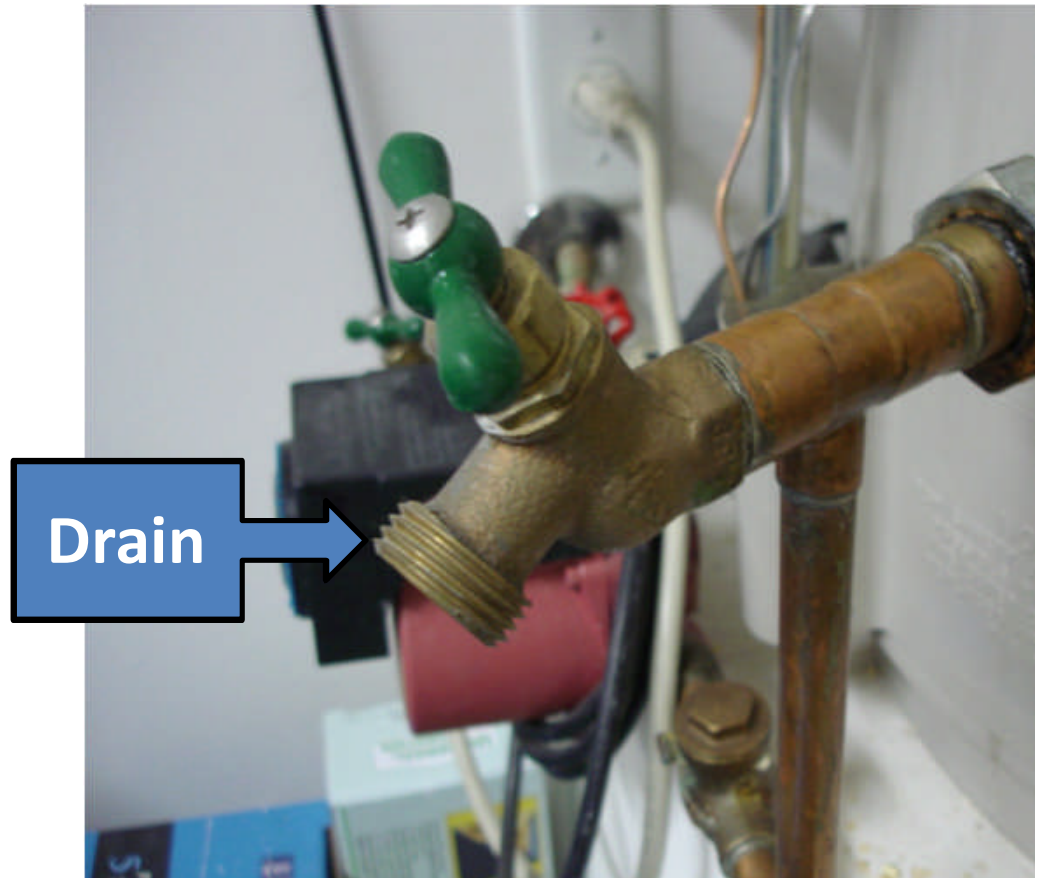
- Life of anode directly related to water usage
- Rules of Thumb for Anode Life:
  - 3.5 years = 2 people showering daily**
  - 4 to 5 years = 1 person showering daily**
  - 6 to 6.5 years = 2 people living half time in home**
- Using Water Softener? **Cut 6 months life**
- Next Slide: Photos of Decaying Anodes

# Anode Rods At Different Failure Stages



# FAQ # 3: When To Drain Water Heater?

- Manufacturers recommend **draining tank** every **6 months**. But, that fails to remove all sediment.
- Better Option:  
Keeping water pressure **on** – **Flush** 5 Gallons into a **WHITE** bucket -- every **6 months**



# Cycle Drain Valve -- Open & Shut

- Cycle **several** times to stir up sediment and minerals on the bottom to get them **flushed out**.



# Be Sure To Use WHITE Bucket

- Look for clear water and small amount of sediment
- Repeat flushing process until all sediment is **gone.**



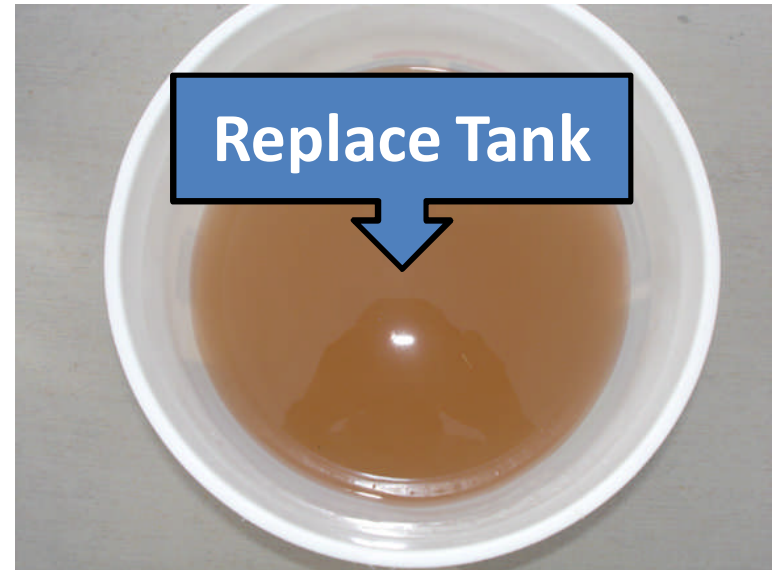
# Colored Water: Replace Anode Rod

- If water is **light brown**, anode is almost gone
- **Replace** it immediately



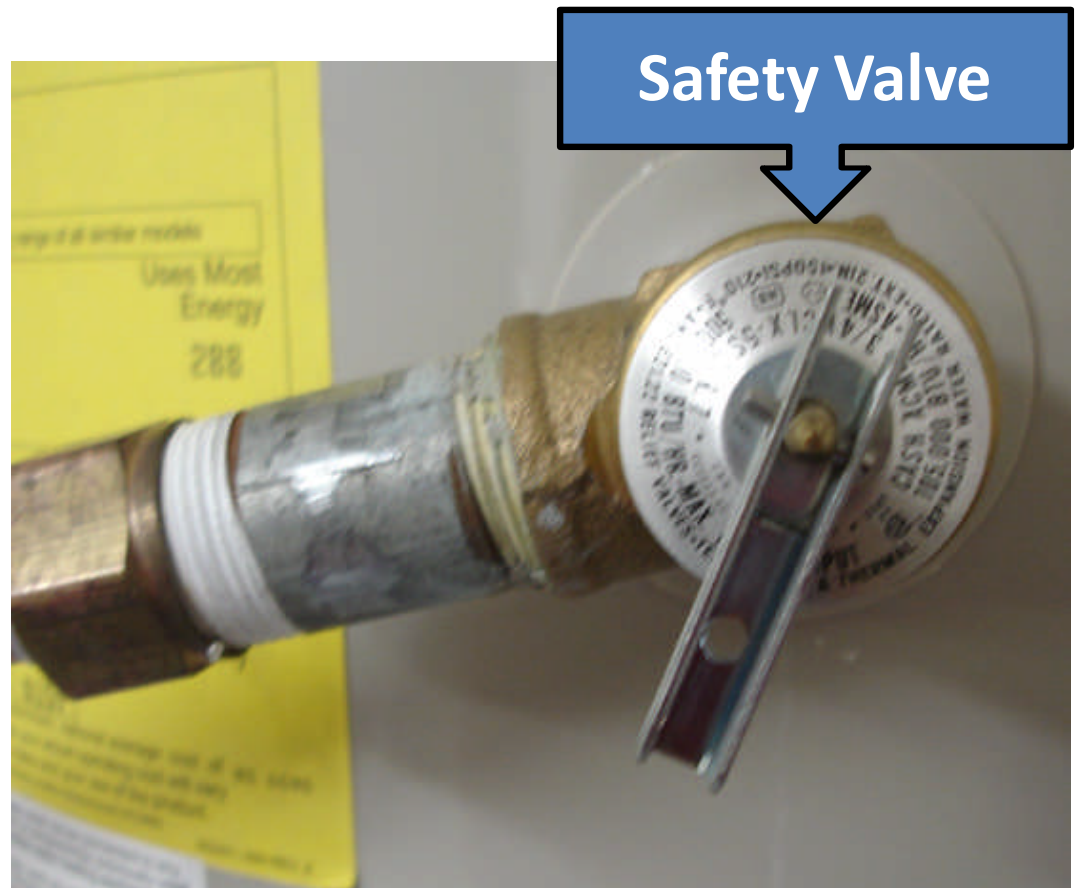
# Dark Colored Water: Replace Tank

- If water is dark **brownish-red**, or **blood red**, the **tank** should be replaced—could be **unhealthy**
- It takes only 2 to 6 months to eat a hole in the tank—**after** anode rod has been dissolved



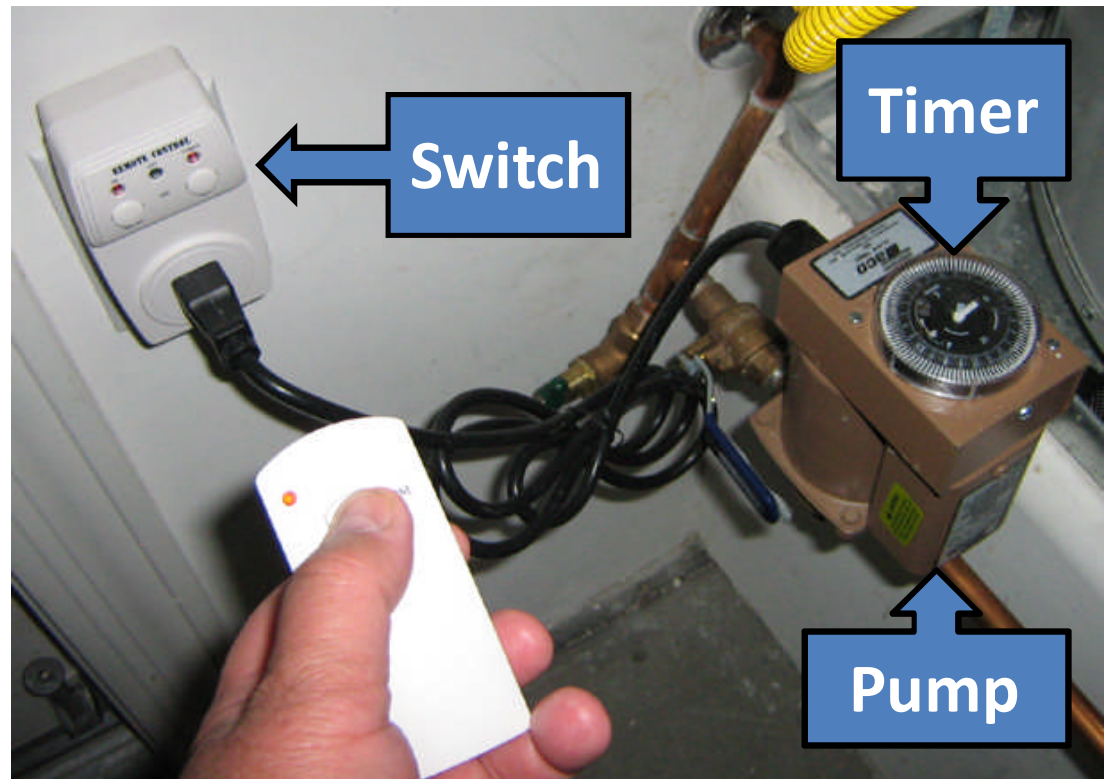
# FAQ # 4: When To Check Safety Valve?

- Check high pressure safety relief valve at least every **2 years**
- Located at top of water heater—it protects the tank from exploding if thermostat fails



# FAQ # 5: What About Recirculation Pump?

- Set timer to run **only** when hot water is needed.
- To save energy, install **\$13 wireless switch** (one source: Fry's Electronics). Only use 3-pronged, grounded type.
- Remote works anywhere in the home--pays for itself in one month.



# Summary

- Check your water heater at least **twice** a year.
- Get your anode rod replaced as soon as you see any **color** in the water.
- Check pressure **valve** every 2 years.
- Set your booster pump timer to **only** run when hot water is most frequently needed.
- Consider installing a **wireless switch with the pump** for max energy saving.