



Typical installation of submersible pump.

## Flushing Your Pressure Tank



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- Do you know where your well is located?
- Do you know which tank is your pressure tank and which is your hot water heater?
- Do you know where your power supply to the pump is located so that you can shut it off for this process or an emergency?
- Please try to keep a copy of pertinent water system information near the tank.

### Why is flushing the tank important?

At Gould Well Drilling we deal with water (or no water) issues on a daily basis. By virtue of design, when a well is drilled the machine pulverizes rock turning it into pieces in various sizes and shapes from a powder to the size of a quarter.

Gravity pulls or allows these particles to fall and end up on the sides of the bore hole and accumulate in the bottom of the well (envision a garbage can). After the well is first drilled, this “dirty water” is in a suspended state until it settles or the pump is installed and it is pumped out of the well.

Usually, a good portion of this sediment is pumped out by our installers after installing the pressure tank (before we set the pressure settings) so that we have reduced the chance that pieces of rock and sediment do not plug the controls. Depending upon the characteristics of your well this may take a few months to clear to your satisfaction.

Over time sediment naturally reoccurs; as water passes through the aquifer which your well has been drilled through, it pulls off tiny pieces of rock. Where water enters your

well is called a fracture; when the well was drilled, the pulverized rock packed into the fracture ends. Over time, water enters the borehole through the fractures (introducing the sediment) and it is suspended in the water and coats the sides until it reaches the bottom.

When you change the volume of water you use (fill a pool, water a new lawn, etc) you tend to drop the “static” level of the water to a much lower depth and the new water entering the well now gets really stirred up. At this point, most wells will be pumping a lot of sediment - enough to clog your washing machine screens, accumulate in tubs and glasses and generally be noticeable.

If you have had this occur and have installed a “sediment filter” you are now protecting your hot water heater and fixtures, but when you stop using water, that sediment settles and accumulates in your pressure tank.

Now, every time you draw a large amount of water (bath, washer) you create a situation where the large volume of water passing through the tank will give a charge of sediment and fill up the filter -leaving you with little to no water pressure.

The rule of thumb is that if you have enough sediment to accumulate in

your sink or a cartridge filter, then you need to plan that you have it stockpiled in your pressure tank as well. For this reason, we want to give you a quick guideline to “flush” your tank; I like to recommend once a year -in the summer time.

- 1) At the tank, there will be a pipe where the water comes through your foundation wall or up through the floor. Opposite that should be a ball valve (a handle which should turn 90° towards or away from you); this is how you shut off the water service to you house and “isolate” the tank.
- 2) Turn off the power to the pump (either a switch on the wall near the tank or as a breaker in your panel listed as “Well Pump”).
- 3) Put a hose onto your hose port on the tank “T” and then let the tank completely empty out. I like to use a 5 gallon white pail to put the hose end into so I can see the amount of sediment coming out. This allows you to gauge how many times you need to repeat the process.
- 4) Go back to the tank and turn the hose handle “off”. Turn the power to the pump back on for say 10 seconds; turn the power back off again.
- 5) Open the hose and repeat the process.

You may have to do this several times to get the water coming mostly clear; if you find that after 15 repeat flushes you still have very dirty water you would be better off replacing the tank.

This type of accumulation causes undue wear and tear on the bladder which holds the water inside the tank and causes the bladder to rupture or get a hole and leak above into the air pressure cavity. When this occurs you will have a “rapid cycling” event where you will hear the pressure switch click on and off quite rapidly.

This behavior makes the pump turn on and off much more frequently than it is designed to so the motor heats up and then shuts down due to over heating. If this process is allowed to go on for too long you will do damage to the pump and risk shortening the pump life dramatically.

A diagram of a standard well water system is on the flip side so that you can familiarize yourself with the components.

We consider this a form of educating you the homeowner to be the most aware and most pro-active you can be in extending the life of your system.

Please call us if you should have any questions.