

RAE Water & Sewer

10 RAE Water Lane
Bozeman, MT 59718
(406) 586-3930



Dear Water Customer

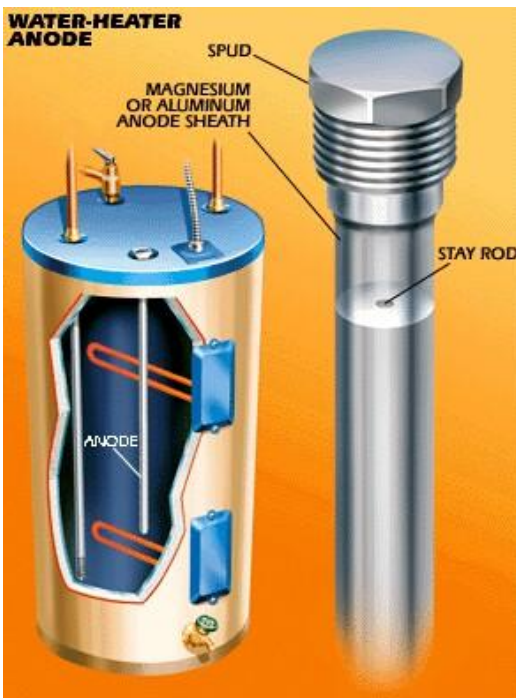
If your water smells like rotten eggs, we may have a solution for you!

Hydrogen-sulfide or sulfur-smell is typically caused by bacteria growing in a hot water heater. Odor complaints usually come from customers in new homes (new hot water heaters).

The RAE Water District does not add chlorine to the drinking water, and hence any bacteria in the hot water tank can cause this odor. The effective solution is to disinfect the hot water heater with chlorine bleach, and the odor problem goes away.

Sulfur odor is caused when there is sulfur, hydrogen and bacteria. Hot water also helps create an environment for bacteria to grow. There is a small amount of sulfur in most water. Hydrogen is produced by the sacrificial anode that is installed in hot water heaters (the anode is usually composed of magnesium, and since this produces electrons (hydrogen), this keeps the steel in your hot water heater from rusting). Many people replace the magnesium anode rod with a zinc/aluminum rod, and the odor problem goes away.

Other people chlorinate their hot water heater and the odor goes away. Here is how to do it: (you could just call a plumber and have them do it. If you are handy you can probably do it yourself):



- Turn off the gas or electric supply to the tank.
- Turn off the cold water supply valve to the tank.
- Open a nearby hot water faucet to relieve the vacuum.
- Open the tank drain valve and drain off 1 gallon of water (be careful as the water will be hot). Close tank drain valve.
- Remove the anode rod (typically located on the top of the tank).
- Use a funnel and add ½ gallon of chlorine bleach to the tank.
- Reinstall the anode rod (Optional: replace magnesium anode rod with zinc/aluminum anode rod).
- Open the cold water supply line to the tank.
- Run the hot water faucets in your house until you smell chlorine. Also run the dishwasher until you

smell chlorine.

- Turn off the faucets and let the chlorine sit in the tank and in the lines for 30 minutes.
- Flush the chlorine from all the hot water lines until you don't smell chlorine anymore.
- Turn back on your hot water heater and all should be fine!

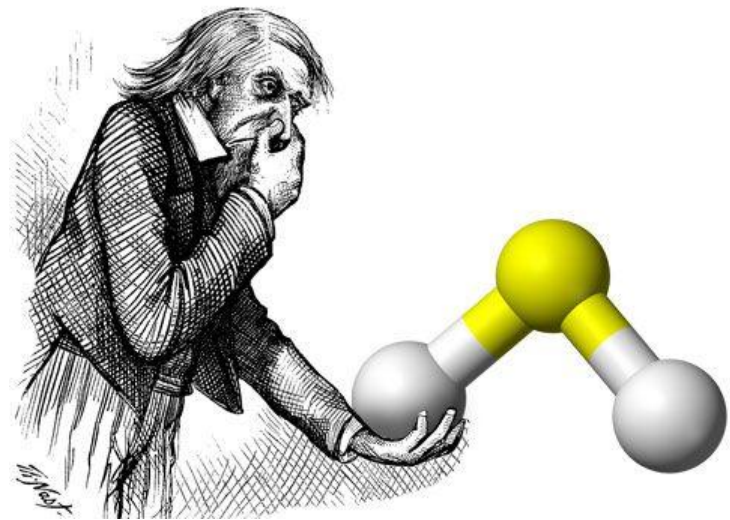
If you have any questions or need additional information, please call the office at 586-3930.

Sincerely yours,

David A. King

David King
Manager, RAE Water and Sewer

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What Is That Rotten Egg Smell?

