

## Fresh Water Tank Drain Valve

We recently have received two emails concerning the fresh water tank drain valve; wanting to know how to access and or upgrade.

#1

I have a 2003 Classic, 31'. The plastic drain valve on the fresh water tank is nearly impossible to turn. I had a 1982 Limited before this trailer and it had the same valve, so Airstream has been using this valve for a long time and in both cases that valve is very hard to turn. I've heard of some owners putting vegetable oil on it but that doesn't work. I am always afraid it will break when I put a pliers on it.

Also, it is so small that the flow out of it is so slow that it is not feasible to flush the tank.

Is there a replacement valve for this, maybe a brass valve and if I take the valve off, what is behind it so that I can install a better valve?

This is of interest to all owners at our rallies and it is a good subject for you to write on.

#2

I have a 2014 23 ft Flying Cloud and the plastic drain valve on the bottom of the fresh water holding tank needs to be replaced. I was driving on a 20-mile asphalt road in WA State that had just been chipped sealed and had a lot of gravel on it that pelted the valve for at least 25 min and caused it to crack. I checked online and it looks like there is no easy fix to this problem. Many people have posted the same problem. It appears this is a poor design. I think it should be a brass valve and not plastic. Any easy ideas on how to replace this valve? I removed the 2 screws that hold the plastic valve in place but it does not come loose. I have heard that the outer cover of the tank and insulation must be cut?



Unfortunately, there are not many choices on the market when it comes to the fresh water tank drain valve. If you search the internet the old white plastic drain valve is what you will find.

The best way to access and repair the valve is to cut an access hole in the bottom of tank pan. The hole should be no more than a 5x5 in. hole starting at outside edge of tank pan (some units already have an access plate) and when finished, you will need to fabricate a cover.



When cutting, you will be going through the tank pan and white foam insulation. Once this is removed you will have access to the hose clamp. The hose is clear plastic with a spring on the inside.



I have enclosed some pics of what the inside of tank pan looks like behind the white valve. You will not hit the tank if you stay to outside as there is about 6-inch space between outside of pan and tank. access to the hose clamp. The hose is clear plastic with a spring on the inside.

The one issue to finding an alternative fresh water tank valve is the location and lack of room for a larger valve. When the valve is located on the side of the tank pan it is located by the tires with not a lot of available space and if mounting on the bottom of tank pan you have the concern of ground clearance. That being said, here are a couple valves that may be something to try.

Options:



**Ball valve with brass elbow (currently used on some Airstream models as a low point drain).**



**Aftermarket valve sold by gentleman on eBay. List under fresh water drain valve.**

### **Cleaning**

Taking care of the fresh tank drain valve: regularly clean and operate the drain valve. The valve is exposed to all kinds of weather, road chemicals and dirt that will collect on the valve. It is not easy to access the drain valve (down on hands and knees) but a good cleaning with a toothbrush

and some soapy water followed up with a little spray of silicone will help keep it operating. Never use any type of oil or grease product as it will collect dirt.

### **Flushing Fresh Water Tank**

Concerning the question of flushing the tank out through a larger drain valve. The only way to really flush out the tank would be if you removed the tank and flushed out through the gravity fill inlet. The best way to keep fresh water tank clean is to filter all water you are putting in your fresh tank, only use a certified white drinking water hose (and only use it for fresh water). It is recommended that you sanitize (bleach) your fresh tank and water lines before putting into storage.