

What If I Don't Install A Backflow Prevention Assembly After Receiving Notification To Do So?

If you do not install your backflow prevention assembly, your water service may be terminated to protect the ECUA's water system.

Who Can Install A Backflow Prevention Assembly?

A licensed plumber must install your backflow prevention assembly and it shall be tested by a certified backflow prevention assembly tester. The tester's report must be faxed to ECUA's Backflow Prevention & Cross-Connection office at 850-969-6664, or emailed to the address indicated on the next panel of this document.

Where Can I Get More Information About Cross-Connection Control?

American Water Works Association's web-site at: <http://www.awwa.org>

University of Southern California's Foundation for Cross Connection Control & Hydraulic Research:
<http://www.usc.edu/dept/fccchr>

The University of Florida's Treeo Center:
<http://www.treeo.ufl.edu/backflow-prevention-training.aspx>

Mandating Authorities:

There are several mandating authorities regarding Cross-Connections & Backflow Prevention. The Federal Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 (SDWA) provides jurisdiction over the public health aspects of the drinking water supply. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) administers the requirements of the SDWA including cross-connection control.



Emerald Coast Utilities Authority

Environmental Controls Program
Backflow Prevention & Cross-Connection
Control Program

P.O. Box 15311
9255 Sturdevant Street
Pensacola, FL 32514
residential.cross.connection@ecua.fl.gov
850-969-3337
Fax: 850-969-6664



Residential Backflow Prevention and Cross Connection Control:

What You Need to Know to Comply with the FDEP Cross Connection Control Rule





What are Backflow & Cross-Connections?

Water systems depend on pressure to keep water flowing in the proper direction. Water distribution systems are designed so that the pressure is greater in the lines delivering the water, than the pressure on the property side of the water meter. However, when there is a drop in water pressure on the utility's side, a reverse flow can occur. This is called back siphonage or backflow. When this happens, it is possible for contaminated water from a private home's plumbing system to get pulled back (backflow) into the public water system. If the water in that home's system has come into contact with harmful substances and it backflows into the municipal drinking water system, it could cause illness or, in extreme cases, death.

ECUA works diligently to ensure its drinking water remains safe. We require backflow prevention assemblies where they are required by law, (Florida



Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Cross Connection Control Rule 62-555.360) and we work with customers to eliminate any potential cross-connections in our customers' plumbing that, without the protection of a backflow prevention assembly, could lead to dangerous situations. With an understanding of the hazards associated with potential cross-connections and backflow, you can help us protect our community's drinking water.

Do Backflow Incidents Really Happen?

Yes! There are numerous examples including one in Pennsylvania in 1981 where highly toxic insecticide chlordane was back-siphoned into the water system. A local exterminator had left one end of a garden hose in a barrel of diluted insecticide, and the other end connected to an external home hose bib (outside spigot). When the water supply system pressure dropped due to repair work, the chlordane was sucked back through the house plumbing and into the public water system.

Which Residential Properties are Required to have a Backflow Preventer?

Residences that have a dedicated irrigation service connection, a dedicated fire service connection, or an auxiliary water system (i.e. a private well or intake from a pond, lake or stream) are required to have a backflow prevention assembly. The type of assembly required will depend on several factors. A licensed plumber can help you determine the assembly that is required for your property's particular needs.



What is a Backflow Prevention Assembly?

Backflow assemblies are placed on water services to prevent water from flowing back into the public water system. To ensure the assembly is working properly, residential backflow prevention assemblies must be tested every two years.

Types of Backflow Prevention Assemblies

Reduced Pressure (RP):

The RP assembly is effective against backflow and may be used to isolate health or non-health hazards. This device consists of two spring-loaded check valves and a relief valve, usually has shut-off valves on each end, and is equipped with test cocks for testing.



Pressure Vacuum Breaker Assembly (PVB):

The PVB may be used to isolate health or non-health hazards but is not effective against back-pressure backflow. This device is mainly used on irrigation systems without a well or auxiliary water system. This device is testable.



Double Check (DC):

A DC is effective against back pressure, but should only be used to isolate low hazards. The DC has two spring loaded check valves, usually has a shutoff valve on each end and is equipped with test cocks for testing.

