

CROSS-CONNECTION CONTROL AND BACKFLOW PREVENTION

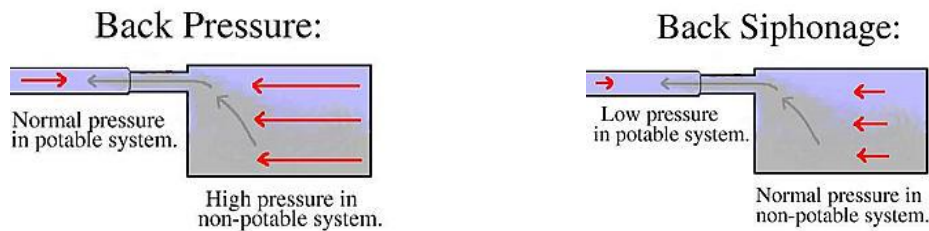
The Stockbridge Water Dept makes every effort to ensure that the water delivered to you home and business is clean, safe and free of contamination. Our staff works very hard to protect the quality of the water delivered to our customers from the time the water is extracted via deep wells from underground aquifers or withdrawal point from a surface water source, throughout the entire treatment and distribution system. But what happens when the water reaches your home or business? Is there still a need to protect the water quality from contamination caused by a cross-connection? If so, how?

What is a cross-connection?

A cross-connection occurs whenever the drinking water supply is or could be in contact with potential sources of pollution or contamination. Cross-connections exist in piping arrangements or equipments that allowed the drinking water to come in contact with non-potable liquids, solids or gases (hazardous to humans) in event of a backflow.

What is a backflow?

Backflow is the undesired reverse of the water flow in the drinking water distribution lines. This backward flow of water can occur when the pressure created by an equipment or system such as a boiler or air-conditioning is higher than the water pressure inside the water distribution line (backpressure), or when the pressure in the distribution line drops due to routine occurrences such as water main breaks or heavy water demand causing the water to flow backward inside the water distribution system (backsiphonage). Backflow is a problem that many water consumers are unaware of, a problem that each and every water customer has a responsibility to help prevent.



What can I do to help prevent a cross-connection?

Without the proper protection something as simple as a garden hose has the potential to contaminate or pollute the drinking water lines in your house. In fact over half of the country's cross-connection incidents involve unprotected garden hoses. There are very simple steps that you as a drinking water user can take to prevent such hazards, they are:

- NEVER submerge a hose in soapy water buckets, pet watering containers, pool, tubs, sinks, drains or chemicals.
- NEVER attached a hose to a garden sprayer without the proper backflow preventer.
- Buy and install a hose bibb vacuum breaker in any threaded water fixture. The installation can be as easy as attaching a garden hose to a spigot. This inexpensive device is available at most hardware stores and home-improvement centers.
- Identify and be aware of potential cross-connections to your water line.
- Buy appliances and equipment with a backflow preventer
- Buy and install backflow prevention devices or assemblies for all high and moderate hazard connections.

If you are the owner or manager of a property that is being used as a commercial, industrial or institutional facility you must have your property's plumbing system surveyed for cross-connection by your water purveyor. If your property has NOT been surveyed for cross-connection contact your water department to schedule a cross-connection survey. As an owner of a cross connection control device, you play a critical role in partnering with the water department in keeping our water supply safe. By following the required annual or semi-annual device testing mandated by the Cross Connection Control Regulations at 310 CMR 22.22; and keeping your device in good repair, you prevent contaminants from entering the water supply.

The Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations, 310 CMR 22.00, requires all public water systems to have an approved and fully implemented Cross-connection Control Program (CCCP). The Stockbridge Water Dept is working diligently to protect the public health of its drinking water customers from the hazardous caused by unprotected cross-connections through the implementation of its cross-connection survey program, elimination or properly protection of all identified cross-connections, the registration of all cross-connections protected by a reduced pressure backflow preventers (RPBPs) or a double check valve assemblies (DCVAs), and the implementation of a testing program for all RPBPs and DCVAs.

The following chart shows how the Stockbridge Water Dept's CCCP is being implemented:

Cross-connection Surveys Information:

Type of Facilities	Total # Facilities Served	# Facilities Surveyed for Cross-connection	# Facilities Remaining to be Surveyed for Cross-connection	# Facilities Surveyed for the First Time in 2015	# Facilities Re-surveyed in 2015
Commercial	65	65	0		
Industrial	0	0	0		
Institutional	12	12	0		
Municipal	8	8	0		

Backflow Prevention Devices and Assemblies Testing Information:

Type of Backflow Preventer	# Devices or Assemblies	Test Frequency	Total # of Routine Test	# Test Failures	# Re-test
RPBP	70	Semi-annual*	121	3	3
DCVA	24	Annual*	21	1	1
PVB (if applicable)		Annual **			

* Required frequency

** Recommended

NOTE: some of the above devices are seasonal and only require one test during the summer season as they are mostly irrigation systems.

If you have any questions, please contact Water Supt. Mr. Michael P. Buffoni at (413)298-5581

Some Examples Where Cross-connections Occur

