

What Is Being Done About It?

Cross-connections are prohibited by state, county, and local municipal plumbing codes and ordinances. All Michigan water utilities are now required by the Safe Drinking Water Act 399 to have a Cross- Connection Control Program. The Water Resources Commissioner's Office (WRC) has implemented a program for the inspection, elimination and prevention of cross-connections in all residential, commercial, medical, industrial, and institutional facilities. New and renovated plumbing inspections are initiated through the local city, village or township plumbing permit process while existing plumbing systems are inspected by the WRC as part of the comprehensive program. After your inspection, you will be contacted by letter if you are required to install and/or test any assemblies at your home or place of business. In some instances, you will need to hire an ASSE 5110 certified tester to properly test these assemblies. Please help to protect yourself and your neighbors by eliminating potential cross connections within your plumbing systems.

Where Can I Get More Information?

If you would like more information, or if at any time you suspect a backflow has occurred, contact the WRC Cross Connection Unit at:

Residential: (248) 858-1431

Commercial: (248) 858-9387

Fax: (248) 858-7939

Email: wrcrossconnection@oakgov.com

Or you may visit us online at:

www.oakgov.com/crossconnection



Jim Nash

Safe Drinking Water

It's Your Responsibility Too!

Jim Nash
Oakland County Water Resources
Commissioner's Office
One Public Works Drive
Waterford, Michigan 48328-1907
Phone: (248) 858-0958

What Is A Cross-Connection?

A cross-connection is an arrangement of piping or fixtures through which a backflow could occur. Think of the things around your home or business which contain water you wouldn't want to drink; lawn sprinklers, mop buckets, toilet tanks, pools, etc. Any public water connection to these items, and others, forms an avenue through which the contents may backflow into your drinking water system.

What Is Backflow?

Backflow is the reversal of the normal direction of flow which could result in undesirable material entering the water system. Backflow can occur whenever the water pressure is reduced enough to cause a vacuum or "backsiphonage." This same principle is involved when you drink through a straw. Some situations which can cause a backflow are main breaks, hydrants opened for firefighting, or undersized piping. Another form of backflow, called "backpressure," occurs when equipment like lawn irrigation pumps, boilers and power washers are connected to your waterlines. These hazards could force potentially contaminated water back into the public water supply if left unprotected.



What Cross-Connections Might Be In My Home Or Business?

The most common cross-connection is created by using an ordinary garden hose. Hoses are used in a variety of potentially hazardous situations such as fertilizer aspirators, pesticides, laundry tubs, flushing clogged sewers, swimming pools, car washing, etc. All hose bibbs (outside spigots) associated with the above hazards must be equipped with a hose connection type vacuum breaker or one that's built into the spigot.



Picture: AFHBVB (Anti-Frost Hose Bibb Vacuum Breaker) ASSE 1011

Some significant potentially hazardous cross-connections to look for include non-code approved or improperly installed: toilet valves, underground lawn sprinklers, swimming pools, hot tubs, boilers, water powered sump pumps, heating systems, fire sprinklers, hose bibbs, etc.

What Can I Do About It?

You should become familiar with the water system in your residence and/or place of business. Look at every usage point and visualize what might happen if the water flow suddenly reversed from its normal direction.



For example, you should install inexpensive hose connection vacuum breakers (*pictured left*) to prevent backsiphonage through hoses. Lawn sprinkling systems, swimming pools, and boilers must be equipped with an appropriate backflow prevention assembly. In certain instances, you may need professional assistance in determining the required protection against backflow, or to test and certify that your backflow preventers are working properly.