

## ATTENTION RESIDENTS

Please Read the Following Backflow Prevention Guidelines

Carefully and Help Us Keep Our Water Safe!

### What is Backflow?

Water systems depend on water pressure to keep water flowing in the proper direction through pipes. However, anything that causes a drop in water pressure can create a reverse flow from a homeowner's plumbing system back into the public water system. This is called **backflow**.

For example, if you have a garden hose submerged to fill a bucket, Jacuzzi, fish tank, etc., and the water system suddenly loses pressure, the flow of water can be reversed, sucking any contaminants in the water backwards into the system.

A **cross-connection** is any physical connection between a possible source of contamination and the public water system. For example, if a homeowner uses a cistern or an old well for outdoor watering, it cannot in any way be connected to pipes that are connected to the public water system. Even with a bypass valve in place, it is illegal.

### Examples of Cross-Connection and Backflow Scenarios

- Soapy water or other cleaning compounds back siphoned into your water supply plumbing through a faucet or hose submerged in a bucket or basin
- A hose submerged in a swimming pool creates a pathway for pool water to enter your water supply plumbing
- Fertilizers/pesticides and animal or animal waste drawn into your water supply plumbing from a lawn irrigation system with submerged nozzles
- A connection made between a private well supply and the water being supplied by a public water system through the water supply plumbing.

### What Can You Do?

- ✓ Be aware of and eliminate cross-connections
- ✓ Maintain air gaps. So not submerge hoses or place them where they could become submerged (create a gap of air between supply and container)
- ✓ Use hose bib vacuum breakers on fixtures (hose connections in the basement, laundry room and outside)
- ✓ Make sure toilets have anti-siphon ballcock assemblies
- ✓ Install approved, testable backflow prevention devices on lawn irrigation systems
- ✓ Install an approved, testable backflow prevention device at your home's water service connection
- ✓ Do not create a connection between an auxiliary water system (well, cistern, body of water, puddles) and the water supply plumbing

Why is This Important?

Cross connection control is extremely important in public water systems as it is a matter of public health and safety. Most contamination issues in public water systems are not due to the water supply, but due to cross-connections. Therefore, it is very important that all customers are aware of the dangers and take necessary precautions.

Who Do I Contact With Questions or Concerns?

If you have questions concerning any of the information in this handout or would like to report a possible cross connection or backflow situation please contact the office at:

219-253-7818

WHEN A DROP IN WATER PRESSURE TAKES PLACE,  
CHEMICALS OR DIRTY WATER CAN BE SUCKED BACKWARDS  
INTO YOUR HOUSEHOLD PLUMBING SYSTEM.

EXAMPLE

GARDEN HOSE CONNECTED TO A HOME FERTILIZER  
SPRAYER, A HOSE CONNECTED TO A SLOP SINK  
AND A GARDEN HOSE USED TO FILL A SWIMMING POOL.

